

Blissymbolics + Picture Communication Symbols

Related Pages: [AAC](#) [Pictobabble](#) [Semantic Alphabet](#) [Signology](#) [SuttonGlyphs](#)

Trying to teach Blissymbolics using natural languages will probably cause the confusion infesting those languages to enter Blissymbolics. The teaching medium will transfer its patterns to whatever is being taught. And the burden of teaching Bliss through dozens if not hundreds of different tongues and maintaining dictionaries in all those tongues seems daunting to say the least.

Many experts say PCS is easier to learn than Bliss, they're just cartoons, so it's probably true. Of course, we Bliss people feel sure the intellectual potential for users of Bliss far exceeds that of PCS users. Probably also true. Can you imagine PCS explaining Einstein's theory of gravity or Heisenberg's uncertainty principle? Bliss makes easy work of those.

It's ironic, PCS isn't abstract enough to serve serious intellectual expression, and Bliss is too abstract (to the uninitiated) for easy learning. This abstract appearance, prior to learning Bliss, is a major reason confusion may enter the system.

Why not try to solve all these issues in one fell swoop with a hybrid Bliss/PCS system:

1. Teach the Bliss visual language to all language groups without using their native languages, bypassing all the potential confusion from those languages.
2. Give Bliss a less abstract aspect, perhaps preventing semantic drift, polysemy and confusion entering the language.
3. Make Bliss easier to learn for all users.

Each hybrid symbol serves as its own rosetta stone. What do you think of this approach to getting Bliss to all language groups without any need for training?

Picture Communication Symbols are copyrighted by [Mayer Johnson LLC](#), so anyone who wishes to use them must first get permission from them. The small sample above is used here only for discussing this idea. The fair use provision of copyright law allows using small samples of protected material for commentary. If anyone wishes to pursue this idea, they must get permission from Mayer Johnson first, or perhaps better yet, use public domain images or draw their own.

For now, I will continue this discussion using only public domain images and images which I am licensed to publish. But if Mayer Johnson were amenable to the idea, what a wonderful hybrid system could result, since their images are an actual language system which has been tested and is in use.

Now, before I continue, a few suggestions. I feel sure we will need someday, eventually, to dispense with the indicators. At least most of the time. But this is a very debatable issue. So let the debate begin. Here are my reasons:

1. For this "Rosetta Stone" hybrid approach to Blissymbolics to work, fonts and even SVG are out. Standard web image files (like JPEG) are the only way to go for this method, because the cartoon-like images must be part of each Bliss image file so that the two will be locked together wherever they go on the internet. Without the cartoon, the abstract Bliss symbols would eventually accumulate significant misinterpretations. And any collection of images for a pictographic language would be far too large and complicated if we must have a noun version of every image file, and a verb version, and an adjective version, and a plural version, etc, etc, etc.

2. The indicators have always been a formatting nightmare, complicating software design and webpage design.

3. The average users, especially if Bliss begins to spread throughout the internet in an uncontrolled fashion, as it inevitably will, will mess up the indicators anyway. It's not their fault, the indicators are the most abstract and tedious part of the Bliss system and so will be the first to fall to confusion. Let's dump them now, let's not include any in these image files, but let's be thinking in the backs of our minds how they could occasionally be added between these image files in a page. Suggestions as to how we might do this are below.

4. Someday, the evolution of Bliss will be driven by the wild forces of the internet. We cannot stop this. So, by dropping the indicators from these images now, we simplify the interpretation of symbols, improving Bliss' chances of surviving the chaotic decades ahead. And by attaching readily understood (intuitively and without training) cartoons to each Bliss image file, the cartoons will accompany the symbols throughout their journeys on the internet and across linguistic barriers, protecting them from harm (misinterpretation).