

# 渡 船

英文動詞研究

## THE FERRYBOAT

A STUDY OF THE ENGLISH VERB

*by*

C. H. LUNG

龍志霍著

修訂本

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REVISED

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## PREFACE TO THE REVISED EDITION

A revision of this book has long been overdue, now that five years have elapsed since the manuscript was first completed. Continual classroom application of the method has made me the more aware of my own shortcomings and mistakes, and the notes I have so far made from serious and leisure reading alike have augmented so that I am obliged to dispose of them in a new edition.

In this revised edition, I have tried to make up the defects of the first edition with the original general plan intact. Besides important changes made at various points, more than thirty new subsections are added. Six sections (§§14, 31, 54, 55, 67, and 73) are almost entirely rewritten. Corresponding changes are made in the exercises.

I take this opportunity to re-express my thanks to Professor Lü Hsiang, whose review of the first edition prompted me to rewrite §§14 and 31. Acknowledgements are also due Mr. Chang Pei-lin, who, on behalf of the publisher, has made valuable comments and corrections.

C. H. LUNG

Pingfan English Language School,  
Nanking,  
June, 1948

## PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

It is probably not an over-statement that the result of the teaching of English in our schools has not been very encouraging. The causes of this are various. But the facts seem to establish that in very few schools has methodology been given due attention and that the old grammar-translation method still prevails. As a result, the well-meaning teachers of English in senior middle schools have many complaints against their colleagues in junior middle schools; and many of those in colleges, in turn, find that every fall the newly matriculated students, the overwhelming majority of whom have very few good habits in writing and speaking English, have to be so taught that they may be able, in the course of one or two years time, to follow recitations conducted in English and to read English textbooks and references with comparative ease. This is an almost impossible task.

A change of method, however, is much more easily discussed than accomplished; since it necessarily involves the question of a competent teaching staff. Indeed, this question is nation-wide. No private person can solve it.

But, while this question remains, we are confronted with a situation that claims our immediate attention. Every year our middle schools turn out tens of thousands of graduates, whose knowledge of English is on the average far inferior to what is expected of them. What are we going to do about it?

For some years past, the author has every once in a while found spare time to teach English, as a private tutor in the majority of cases. Most of his students are those who are ready to leave middle schools or are freshmen or sophomores at colleges. At the start, the author had no idea of the task to which he was committing himself; for he soon found out that the work before him was much more difficult than he had expected. After a certain period of trial and error, however, he worked out for himself a teaching plan, which was later found to answer his purpose.

Fully aware of the narrowness and scantiness of his experience, the author has nevertheless become convinced that the first thing to do with those students is to help them acquire a clear notion of the nature of English verbs and to implant in them good habits in using them by appropriate exercises in writing as well as in speaking. This does not mean of course that verbs should be studied at the expense of other things that ought also to be mastered. Nevertheless, it is not only because the verb is the life of the sentence, but also because our mother tongue knows so little of different verb forms that English verbs and verbals, when placed before Chinese students, demand the most unsparing lucidity of explanation and the most frequent drills in order to create permanent and instinctively correct habits. Other essential points of grammar can easily be made clear and the students can easily become accustomed to their uses as they go along, on the condition that the teacher know perfectly well how much English his students actually command.

In following such a plan of teaching, no grammar book is suitable as a text though a great many such books can

be profitably consulted. The reasons are these: First, their treatment of the verb is not exhaustive enough to answer the purpose, and very little effort is made in them to compare the various forms. Second, no grammar book, because of the very fact of its being a grammar book, is ever free from a certain degree of rigidity and dryness; this often kills the interests of the students. Third, in most grammar books, definitions and rules and paradigms occupy prominent positions, which are liable to convey to the students a wrong notion of what grammar is and how grammar is to be studied. Fourth, handicapped by a ready-made grammar book, the teacher will find it very difficult, if not impossible, to co-ordinate grammar with reading, which is very important.

These reasons compelled the author to fall back upon his own resources, and in so doing, his teaching plan gradually took concrete form. With necessary alterations and additions and omissions, this method is here presented to the public as a book.

This book, however, is not a comprehensive treatise on the verb. In it, neither the kinds of verbs, nor the kinds of objects, nor the agreement of the subject and the verb is dealt with. The passive voice and the imperative mood are only slightly touched upon. This is because the student who has studied English for some five or six years is expected to have acquired some knowledge of these rudiments of grammar.

The theme in hand, therefore, consists of three parts: the tenses, the subjunctive mood, and the verbals.

But this book is not grammar in the conventional sense of the word.

Formalities are dispensed with: The time-honoured logical order of treatment of the various topics is purposely disregarded. Inflection tables are withdrawn to obscure positions in the appendices in order to impress upon the reader that they have the value only of reference. Rules are not given as hard and fast, but are presented to the readers only as concepts to help generalization and understanding, and are included only when the readers are prepared for them. Nothing is mentioned about the sequence of tenses and the potential and the obligative moods; for it seems advisable to avoid, if possible, loading the text with unnecessary nomenclature.

The usual logical order of things gives place to a method of comparison, which is persistently pursued with the view of bringing into relief the delicate and overlapping shades of meaning of the various forms of verbs and verbals, which are rather puzzling to the unaccustomed Chinese mind.

The substance of the present work is composed of exercises, which are given in sufficient amount to provide necessary material for drills. They are, with very few exceptions, made up either of dialogues or of paragraphs, which, it is hoped, will bring out the exact meaning of the verbs more clearly and which may prove more interesting to the students than disconnected sentences.

This book follows the line of descriptive and explanatory grammar. It is meant to be, not theoretical, but practical.

The subjective and the objective complements, which have much to do with certain tense forms and certain uses of the participle, claim a little more of our attention than they used to invite. Such explanations, however, are outside the scope of the present book. In order that what is

badly needed may not be unduly omitted, these explanations are placed in App. V.

The author might be excused for indulging himself in rather long talks both at the beginning and at the end of the discourse; for he entertains the hope that the students who have this book will learn not only how to use verbs and verbals properly, but also to appreciate, as they proceed with their study, the correct method of approach to the study of the English language, and that they may utilize the method as they continue to pursue their study after they are through with this book.

Some students of English think that grammar is rubbish, which is designed solely for idiots. Some, on the contrary, study it at the expense of reading, writing, and speaking so that it becomes to them a jail meant for life-long imprisonment. The author wishes that he could prove by this book that both these attitudes are wrong, and that grammar is no more nor less than a ferryboat, which is indispensable for crossing the river, but which the passengers need no longer trouble themselves about as soon as they disembark on the opposite bank. Such is the present book, a ferryboat, pure and simple. Grammar is studied in order that it may be forgotten some day when it has become second nature through drill. So is the present book, to be studied in order that some day it may be thrown away without regret, and that the sooner the better.

As to the form of presentation, this book is written throughout in simple English in the form of a monologue. This is done because the author enjoys in it the facility of speaking freely to his readers. It is hoped that the readers, on their part, will find such an intimate form of presenta-



tion less fatiguing than an ordinary grammar book.

The Ferryboat is intended primarily as a manual for self-study, as there are many students who are capable of teaching themselves. But it may also be used as a textbook by a freshman or a senior third year class. In the latter cases, it is best co-ordinated with carefully selected readings, especially in connexion with Chapp. V, VI, and VII. The selections should fulfil two conditions: they should contain a large number of the verb forms being studied and very few of those not yet taken up. For example, the author would suggest John Aikin's *Two Robbers* to accompany §§22 and 23, and George Grey's *Kangaroo Hunting* to accompany Chap. VI.

The author is deeply indebted to Professor Grace M. Boynton of Yenching University for her kind criticisms and encouraging comments, and to Professor Lü Hsiang of University of Nanking, who has very obligingly read the entire manuscript and given the author many invaluable suggestions. The author, of course, is solely responsible for the shortcomings.

The Ferryboat is a new attempt; the need for improvement is pressing. Opinions and suggestions concerning it will be received with gratitude. The author will be much obliged, in particular, to hear from the teachers who use it in the class-rooms.

C. H. LUNG.

Chengtu, May, 1943

## 致 讀 者

爲着某些讀者底便利，作者對本書作以下的說明。

渡船雖也可作高三或大一底教本，但主要地是爲幫助讀了許多年英文，但因爲本身底和環境上的某些原因沒有讀好的學生底自修而寫的。牠是一本文法，但不是因襲的陳舊文法，牠底特點如下：

(1) 渡船專論動詞。根據作者底一點淺短的教學經驗，動詞是學習英文的最大難關。這關不渡過，英文學不好。動詞以外的一些問題，只要讀者在讀本書時肯求‘甚解’，找先生和朋友們的指引，都比較簡單，都是不難順利解決的。

(2) 渡船不是形式的文法。形式的文法底最大缺點是忽略了語句底實質，把應當歸類，比較的詞句割離，孤立。渡船打破了形式的枷鎖，自始至終注重實質，注重比較。

(3) 渡船底最重要部分是練習。文法的了解必須和實用聯繫，要從讀，寫，和講中間去把握，空理論是沒有用的。渡船底練習約占正文篇幅底四分之一。讀者能不能從渡船得着甚麼，不完全在於懂不懂得說理的部分，而在於是不是用心做練習。倘使讀者能夠自己另外閱讀書報，找講和寫的機會，效果當然更大了。

(4) 渡船注重學習方法。本書底導言，插語和結語都是談英文學習方法的；各章中也時常提到方法問題。作者底意思是希望讀者能夠在讀本書時漸漸地把握學習方法。這一點比某一部分的熟練還重要。

下面再談本書的分章和讀法。

(1) 渡船共分七章：第一，二，三章講動詞底時 (tenses)，第四章講懸揣語氣 (subjunctive mood)，第五章講無定動詞 (infinitive)，第六章講分詞 (participle)，第七章講動名詞 (gerund)。第一章之前有導言 (prologue)，說明讀本書所應有的方法上的準備。第四，五章之間有插語 (in-

terlude), 說明變動詞學習方法上的要領; 第七章之後有結語 (epilogue) 說明讀完本書後應當如何進一步學習。

(2) 導言最好是耐心地讀; 以不跳過牠爲好。

(3) 各章中凡是講方法的地方請特別注意。

(4) 有必要時, 一個練習不妨做兩次或三次。答案在「渡船練習答案」單行本中, 凡是成段或成對話形式的練習, 依照答案改正錯誤以後, 最好是把牠們當作精讀的材料, 這自然看讀者底英文程度去決定, 太淺的就不必讀了。若是不做練習, 只拿答案來看, 那是要不得的。

(5) 結語也最好是耐心地讀。

文法只是一隻渡船, 過了河, 渡船就不要了, 這本書也只是一隻渡船而已。作者希望讀者毫無顧惜地扔掉牠的日子來得很快。

作者 於南京平凡英語專修班

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Practice is nine-tenth.—*Emerson*.

It is practice alone that brings the powers of the mind as well as those of the body to their perfection.—*Locke*.

## PROLOGUE

### *At the Inquiry Office of the Ferryboat*

DEAR READER:

You have obtained a copy of the *Ferryboat* and come to my inquiry office. I am very much delighted that you have come. But I know very well that you are here only to make inquiries. You have not decided whether you are going to take the boat; for you do not know yet whether it is advisable to take it, do you? And on my part I have to make sure too whether it is necessary for you to do that. So, my dear reader, indulge me a little if what I am going to say appears to you at the first sight somewhat too long.

#### **(1) Do You Read with Thorough Understanding?**

Perhaps you have studied English for five or six years, or even longer. Do you like it? If not, do you know why? Do you understand your lessons thoroughly? Have you ever tried to do that? Do you suffer when you do not understand thoroughly, or simply helplessly let the lessons alone? Have you ever tried to commit to memory any lessons you have studied? If so, do you recite with understanding? Do the useful expressions in them come off your pen or slip off your tongue naturally when you need them? And in writing, do you find that you make the same or similar mistakes over and over again without yourself knowing how to write better?



If you have none of the troubles enumerated above, bravo! my friend, I congratulate you upon your good luck. You do not need to take the Ferryboat. Go on with your study as usual. I am certain someday you will be able to master the language.

In case you *are* so troubled, please stay and listen to me carefully.

Thorough understanding—that is what you must strive for. I say “thorough”; I do not mean “more or less.” You can test the degree of your understanding in the following way: Take a paragraph from any book you have read and try your hand at translating it into really good Chinese. The degree of understanding is inversely proportional to the difficulties you feel in the act of translation. If you cannot render the paragraph into really good Chinese, it shows that you do not understand it thoroughly.

To read without thorough understanding is like walking in a maze of which you have no cue. Every further step increases your confusion till you are hopelessly bewildered and forever lost. You may be able to recite some good poems or famous orations; but if you do **not** understand them, they are simply dead lumps in your head. Consequently, the useful expressions in them will not be ready for your own use when some occasion demands them. What is the use of memorizing anything if you cannot make proper use of what you have memorized? And if you make mistakes which you do not know how to avoid, it shows that you are not enlightened as to how English words are used and how English sentences are constructed. No wonder, then, you often write English that is really not English, but Chinese English!