新编

大学英语专业实用语法

New English Grammar in Use for English Majors

杨明光 张镇华 编著

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内 容 提 要

本书旨在教会学生如何在语言交际中运用英语语法，帮助他们发现和克服常犯的语法错误。本书最大的特点是，将语法学习与跨文化交际和语用学相结合。全书共分 20 章，每章均以“诊断测试”开头，帮助学生发现不足，然后用简明的语言对主要语法规则和现象进行讲解，并根据需要安排练习供学生操练。

本书全部用英文写成，主要供英语专业学生使用，也可供其他英语爱好者和自学者使用。

图书在版编目（CIP）数据

新编大学英语专业实用语法 / 杨明光，张镇华编著，重庆：重庆大学出版社，2004.11

ISBN 7-5624-3218-X

I. 新... II. ①杨... ②张... III. 英语—语法—高等学校—教材 IV. H314

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字（2004）第 093235 号

新编大学英语专业实用语法

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责任校对：廖应碧 责任印制：秦 梅

*

重庆大学出版社出版发行

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全国新华书店经销

重庆升光电力印务有限公司印刷

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开本：787×960 1/16 印张：29.5 字数：561 千

2004 年 11 月第 1 版 2004 年 11 月第 1 次印刷

印数：1—3 000

ISBN 7-5624-3218- X / H·344 定价：38.00 元

PREFACE

For a student, gra nmar is usually confusing and boring. For a teacher, it is challenging and rewarding. Finding the best way to study and teach English grammar has been a problem long on the mind of the compilers of this book. Since English grammar is essential for students, this text is yet another attempt to help students to understand and, perhaps, even enjoy English grammar.

New English Grammar in Use for English Majors intends to teach the students how to use grammar in practical communication and how to find and correct the errors that they usually make. This book is a tool for self-access learning. In compiling this book we have three main objectives. First, it serves as a coursebook of English grammar for English majors who have studied English in middle school for five or six years. It is to help them review and deepen their understanding of major grammatical structures in English. Second, it provides a number of exercises which are designed on the principle that language teaching is to be combined with cross-cultural communication and pragmatics. Third, it helps students to prepare themselves for English proficiency exams. The book is, of course, not a comprehensive grammar book, such as is available in the book market, but rather a concise review of essential grammar points.

The book consists of twenty chapters, each having a grammatical topic to be discussed. The chapters cover the main areas of English grammar. Special attention is paid to those points which are often confusing to students. Many of the chapters contrast two or more different patterns and emphasize the meaning and use of the forms in context.

Each chapter of the book follows the same format. First, there is a diagnostic test on the main points covered in the chapter. Such a test helps students discover their own deficiencies and correct them using the explanations and exercises that follow. Usually there is a short passage or conversation carried out by native English speakers in a real cultural setting.

The teacher can use these to explain how language is closely linked with a certain culture. The goal of the main body of each chapter is to deal with major grammatical structures in simple language, avoiding the complicated technical terms that usually appear in other grammar books. Some of the chapters have comparatively detailed explanations to provide students with some practical strategy to cope with special difficulties. Then there are exercises for practice and exercises for retesting the students' understanding. The exercises can be done in class or as homework. An answer key is provided at the back of the book.

New English Grammar in Use for English Majors is intended not only for students in classes or preparing for proficiency exams, but also for those who are interested in English and are working on their own.

Yang Mingguang
Zhang Zhenhua

CONTENTS

Introduction to Grammar

What is grammar?

The word "grammar" has many meanings. For some people, grammar specifies the "correct" way to speak or write. For others, the word refers to the inflections (the word endings; an alternation of the form of a word by adding affixes, as in English *dogs* from *dog*, or by changing the form of a base, as in English *spoke* from *speak*, that indicates grammatical features such as number, person, mood, or tense) common in many languages. For still others, the grammar is about how humans organize ideas into words. The word "grammar" means all of those things. But, for us, the word means something quite specific: grammar describes how we choose and arrange our words. Grammar is more than passively learning ideas about the organization of words in a language. Grammar is also an activity. Yet before we begin to explore more examples of the grammar of human language at work, let's first settle some initial concerns: what does "grammar" mean and what is the place of grammar in the structure of language as a whole?

Definition

Grammar is a description of the structure of a language and the way in which linguistic units such as words and phrases are combined to produce sentences in the language. It usually takes into account the meanings and functions these sentences have in the overall system of the language. It may or may not include the description of the sounds of a language. (Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics)

Grammar is about how units of language are sequenced, since quite obviously language proceeds sequentially, linearly: in speech, one sound is uttered before the next, one syllable before the next, one word before the next, and so on; in writing, one word precedes the next, one phrase precedes the next, one clause precedes the next, and so on. So at some point in the production of language, humans must take all their thoughts, requests, desires, and hopes that are relevant within a particular context of situation and

produce language that expresses those meanings and organizes those ideas sequentially. The same is true in the inverse for the perception of language.

Now one might quite rightly ask "doesn't the word 'grammar' alone suggest some sequential arrangement of linguistic units?" Yes, the idea of grammar (both in its popular and in several of its technical senses) does emphasize the importance of the right sequence of words, phrases, and clauses within a sentence. However, there are many reasons why those of us who are fascinated by language and interested in accurately describing and explaining how language works should pay close attention to words in grammar. For our purposes here, we will discuss only two.

First, if we were to ask people what they thought were the fundamental building blocks of language, they would very likely say "Words" more than any other response (with "syllable" the only real competition). Words seem to be the most obvious component of language, and any theory that fails to account for the contribution of words to the functioning of language is unworthy of our attention. So for that reason alone we need to include words in our study of grammar. Moreover, there are many other, less obvious, reasons why we need to attend to words in our grammatical description.

To illustrate this second reason for the importance of words in our description of grammar, consider sentences 1 through 4:

1. The water evaporated.
2. The dog evaporated.
3. The water evaporated quickly.
4. The water evaporated the dog.

Sentences 1 through 4 illustrate that the word *evaporate* is restricted in its usage in quite specific ways. But if we had only to work with a grammar of English that examines grammatical structures without referring to the lexicon, we would quickly discover the weakness of our grammatical analysis. For example, looking at the structure of the sentences in 1 through 4, we see some really quite ordinary arrangements of clause elements, arrangements that occur regularly in English. In 1 and 2, we have the Subject-Verb (SV) pattern; in 3 we see the Subject-Verb-Adverbial (SVA) pattern; in 4 we find the Subject-Verb-Object (SVO) pattern. Now a grammar that ignores the lexicon will describe all the sentences in 1 through 4 as well-formed structures (since they are after all very common clause patterns), only to realize the

inadequacy of such a description and propose some kind of remedy to the problem elsewhere in the theory.

However, if the theory incorporates into its grammar all the meaningful distinctions found in the lexicon, then there need be no division between the grammatical and lexical 'levels' in our analysis of language. In our example, in other words, our grammar will be sensitive to the fact that in real language, we must distinguish between transitive (verbs that can occur with an object in an SVO pattern) and intransitive (verbs that may not occur with an object, but may occur with some other complement, such as an adverbial, as in the SV and SVA patterns). Thus, by recognizing that some forms function as intransitive verbs, we can explain why 4 seems so peculiar, while 1 and 3 seem quite ordinary. Further, if our description of the language — our grammar that is — also recognizes the distinction between verbs that can co-occur with 'agent' subjects as opposed to those verbs that do not, then we can explain why 2 seems odd.

Now that we have some sense of why the lexicon contributes so substantially to our understanding of a language's grammar, we may go on to consider grammar's place in the structure of language. Halliday assumes four levels at work, simultaneously, in the production and perception of language:

- the context of the language situation (pragmatics)
- meaning (semantics)
- wording (grammar)
- sound patterns (phonology and phonetics)

To illustrate how the different levels of language co-exist, consider the odd examples of sentences 2 and 4 again. Given our conventional world as the context for the language situation we are in at this moment, sentences like 2 and 4 do seem strange since they suggest ideas that we recognize as unlikely. But, if we changed the context of situation to that of science fiction, suddenly sentences like 2 and 4 make sense. Assuming some alternate universe where our laws of physics are pushed beyond our experience or altogether useless, sentences 2 and 4 are meaningful.

For another example, consider these sets of contexts and sentences: all four sentences are requests for an open window from the speaker to a listener. However, the context of situation is different for each sentence. Which sentence goes with which situation below?

	Sentence		Situation
(a)	Pardon me, sir, but would you mind opening the window?	(i)	Doing homework with your girl-/boyfriend.
(b)	Open the window, will ya buddy?	(ii)	Baby-sitting your snotty younger brother.
(c)	Open the window NOW.	(iii)	Meeting with the dean in his office.
(d)	Gee, it's hot in here.	(iv)	Sitting on a bus next to a man dressed in work clothes.

If you found that you could match (a) with (iii), (b) with (iv), (c) with (ii), and (d) with (i), then you were experiencing how context, meaning, and wording all mutually interact in language.

In (a), notice that the context of situation (meeting with the dean in his office) places us in a socially less powerful position. After all, we are in his office; we are not on his social/political level. Therefore, when we make a request of someone 'above' us on some social scale, notice how the meaning and the wording (grammar) change: the request is not in the form of a command, but more politely put in the form of a question. Yet even though the grammar of (a) is the form of a question that could be answered by *yes* or *no*, we do not mean it to be interpreted as a question, nor do we expect it to be interpreted by the dean as a *yes/no* question. (Indeed, if the dean answered "No," we could most likely interpret the response as either an attempt at humor or an act of hostility.) Other markers of politeness in (a) are the speaker's request for permission to speak (*Pardon me*) and the vocative (*sir*).

In (b) and (c), we find two forms that are commands. We can distinguish them and match their contexts because of the differing markers of politeness in each. In (b), the tag question at the end of the command makes it less forceful, as does the familiar term of address (*buddy*) and the informal pronunciation of the pronoun *you*. Those features of grammar point to a situation in which one is probably speaking to a stranger in a close situation. In (c), however, one finds the same command ending with a heavily stressed time adverbial, highlighting through the grammar the forcefulness of the command and the speaker's social power.

In (d), we have another form that is not a command at all grammatically: it is a statement. But notice that it begins with a word to indicate the speaker's discomfort (*Gee*), and notice that the word *hot* is ambiguous in this context, possibly referring either to the speaker's temperature or the speaker's excitement in this context.

In (a) through (d), we can see, therefore, that the context of situation, the meaning, the grammar, and even the sound patterns mutually interact to create the language we use. But notice in those examples that the choices of wording (grammar) do not simply *encode* meaning: rather, the grammar *makes* meaning. That distinction is fundamental between this theory of language and other theories of grammar.

To understand more about grammar, we must examine the grammatical constituents of language (categories), how those constituents combine at different levels (constituency), and how those combinations of constituents can create meaning.

Why do we study grammar?

Do we need to study grammar for language-learning? The short answer is "no". Many people in the world speak their own native language without having studied its grammar. Children start to speak before they even know the word "grammar". But if you are serious about learning a foreign language, the long answer is "yes, grammar can help you to learn a language more quickly and more efficiently." It's important to think of grammar as something that can help you, like a friend. When you understand the grammar (or system) of a language, you can understand many things yourself, without having to ask a teacher or look in a book. So think of grammar as something good, something positive, something that you can use to find your way – like a signpost or a map.

Grammatical hierarchy

Grammar is the structural system of a language. The grammar of the English language is organized into five ranks: the sentence, the clause, the phrase, the word and the morpheme. Each rank is composed of one or more than one grammatical unit of the immediate lower rank. Thus the sentence is a grammatical unit that consists of one or more than one clause; the clause, one or more than one phrase; the phrase, one or more than one word; and the word, one or more than one morpheme. The sentence is the