

当代英语  
实用语法

A PRACTICAL GRAMMAR  
OF CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH

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GRAMMAR  
OF  
CONTEMPORARY  
ENGLISH

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OF CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH

湖南教育出版社

nglish

徐立吾 著

# 当代英语实用语法

增订本

湖南教育出版社

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徐立吾

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## PREFACE

This book is designed and compiled as a textbook for Chinese students who make a speciality of the English language. It consists of 25 chapters and divides into two parts. The seventeen chapters constituting Part One are a general survey of morphology. Different classes of words, generally called parts of speech, and their forms and inflections are discussed to a certain degree, but special stress is laid on details of the verb that Chinese students find to be most perplexing. The eight chapters of Part Two deal with syntax with the structures and functions of different kinds and types of sentences as the key links. It sometimes extends its interest in particular cases of usage when they may throw light on grammatical problems under discussion, and in addition, Chinese equivalents are occasionally put in to remove possible difficulties from the path of the learners. Since it is compiled to meet the needs of students of English, it is provided with plenty of exercises, a key to which is published separately.

In preparing this book, the compiler has made free use of so many books on grammar for reference that his grati-

tude is beyond his power of expression. (The bibliography is given at the end of the book.)

Thanks are due to so many teachers and students in the Department of Foreign Languages of Hunan Teacher's College that it is impossible to list all their names. Special acknowledgment, however, should be made of valuable help from Professors Liu Zhongde and Zhao Zhentao; the former read all the chapters on verbs and gave some good advice; the latter let the compiler freely draw upon his precious material, went over the whole of the book and made a lot of suggestions and corrections. Without their help, the book would contain many more imperfections than it does.

Finally, the compiler wishes to express his hearty welcome to any criticisms and suggestions. They will be highly valued.

August 1984

**Xu Liwu**

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

#### 1.1 What does English grammar deal with?

English grammar deals with the systematic rules of the English language, its forms, inflections and syntax, and the art of ruling them correctly. It is usually divided into two parts: Morphology and Syntax.

In morphology we study the different classes of English words, generally called parts of speech, and their inflexion, that is, the forms of number and case of nouns and pronouns, the forms of tense, voice, mood, etc. of verbs and the forms of the degrees of comparison of adjectives and adverbs.

In syntax we study the arrangement of words, that is, how words of different classes are combined into sentences, and also different types and kinds of sentences, their structures, functions, meanings, etc.

The two parts of grammar — morphology and syntax — are charged with their respective functions, but they are closely interrelated. While studying words and their



forms, we should consider how they are to be used in the sentences and, while discussing sentence structures, we should consider what words and what forms are to be employed.

## 1.2 Words

### 1) The parts of speech

According to their meaning, features and functions, English words are classified into ten parts of speech:

- |                     |                       |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| (1) the Noun        | (2) the Article       |
| (3) the Pronoun     | (4) the Adjective     |
| (5) the Numeral     | (6) the Verb          |
| (7) the Adverb      | (8) the Preposition   |
| (9) the Conjunction | (10) the Interjection |

With only a few exceptions, every word must belong to one of these ten classes. But do not think that a word must always belong to the same class. A good many words belong to more than one class and accordingly perform different functions in different sentences. Examine the italicized words in the following sentences:

- (1) I'll show you *round* the city. (prep.)
- (2) *Round* your lips when you produce the sound [u:]. (vt.)
- (3) The talks *have rounded* into a peace treaty. (vi.)
- (4) The girl has a *round* voice. (adj.)

(5) Shall I show you *round*? (adv.)

(6) That was a contest decided by a single *round*.

(n.)

**Note:** Besides the ten parts of speech above, there are still a few quite peculiar words:

“Yes” is the word of affirmation. “No” is the word of negation. The sign “to” of the infinitive is called the particle “to”. According to some grammarians, “it”, “there”, or “as” may be termed an *expletive or introductory word*.

## 2) Conversion (转化)

In accordance with usage, a word which primarily belongs to a certain part of speech may be converted into another part of speech, e. g.

• Our team has already had four *wins* this season.

(v. > n.)

In the airfight they *downed* three enemy planes.

(adv. > v.)

The gang *wronged* (adj. > v.) a lot of poor *innocents*.

(adj. > n.)

It is no joke, let's have a *rethink*. (v. > n.)

Tell me the *why* and the *how* of it! (adv. > n.)

## 3) Word-formation (构词)

### (1) Affixation (缀合)

(a) Prefixation (加前缀), e. g.

*disapprove* (v.),                      *ungrateful* (adj.),  
*misdeed* (n.),                         *de-escalate* (v.),  
*post-election* (n.)                    *anti-social* (adj.).

(b) Suffixation (加后缀), e. g.

*gangster* (n.),                         *suitable* (adj),  
*deepen* (v.),                         *clockwise* (adj.).

(2) Compound (复合), e. g.

a brown *blackbird* (n.),  
a *long-distance* telephone (adj.),  
(to) *outnumber* the enemy (v.),  
(to) *soft-land* on the moon (v.);  
an *open-to-all* secret (adj.),  
a touch of *what-is-it* (n. 有些怀疑),  
*wishy-washy* tea (adj),  
*film-goers* (n.).

(3) Blending (混成), e. g.

*brunch* (= breakfast + lunch n. 早午餐作一顿进的餐),  
*motel* (= motor + hotel n. 附有停车场的汽车游客旅馆),  
*moped* (= motor-assisted pedal-cycle n. 机动脚踏两用车),

*Interpol* (= international police n. 国际警察组织).

(4) Back-formation (逆序构词), e. g.

(to) *fire-watch* < *fire-watcher* (v. < n.),  
(to) *mass-produce* < *mass-production* (v. < n.);

(to) *liaise* < *liaison* (v. < n.);

(to) *edit* < *editor* (v. < n.).

(5) Abbreviation (缩写)

(a) Clipping (缩略), e. g.

*phone* < *telephone*,

*photo* < *photograph*,

*flu* < *influenza* (流行性感冒).

(b) Initialling (首位字母连写), e. g.

EEC (= the European Economic Community),

UN (= the United Nations),

C. O. D. (= cash on delivery),

IMF (= the International Monetary Fund).

(c) Acronymizing (首位字母拼音), e. g.

*laser* ['leɪzə] (= lightwave amplification by stimulated  
emission of radiation 激光),

*NATO* ['neɪtəʊ] (= the North Atlantic Treaty Organi-  
zation),

*SALT* [sɔ:lt] (= the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks),

*UNESCO* [ju(:)'neskəʊ] (= the United Nations Educa-  
tional, Scientific and Cultural  
Organization).

(6) Analogy (类比) e. g.

*nightmare* > *daymare* (白天作恶梦),

*sunrise* > *earthrise* (月平线上看地球升起),

black list > white list (准予上映的影剧名单),  
the First (or the Second, the Third) World > the Fourth  
World (资产阶级所指的最贫困集团).

### 1.3 Members of a Sentence

A sentence consists of different parts known as *members of the sentence*. In English there are seven of them:

- |                    |                   |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| 1) the Subject     | 2) the Predicate  |
| 3) the Predicative | 4) the Object     |
| 5) the Attribute   | 6) the Appositive |
| 7) the Adverbial   |                   |

(See Chapter XVIII.)

**Note:** In this grammar, we regard the object complement as part of the complex object.

### 1.4 Phrases, Clauses and Sentences

1) A phrase is a group of related words that contains some definite but not complete meaning; it does not contain either a subject or a predicate. A phrase can only play a single part of a sentence. According to their various head words, phrases fall under the following divisions:

(1) Verb Phrases, e. g.

All difficulties *have now been ironed out*.

(2) Prepositional Phrases, e. g.

You will find the scenery pleasing *to both the eye and the mind.*

(3) Infinitive Phrases, e. g.

Cast iron is apt *to break.*

(4) Participial Phrases, e. g.

*Not knowing what to do,* she applied to me for advice.

*Given enough time,* this can be done.

(5) Gerundial Phrases, e. g.

Better stop him (from) *getting into trouble* before it's too late.

(6) Noun Phrases, e. g.

*A friend in need* is a friend indeed. (proverb)

(7) Pronominal Phrases, e. g.

It's *one and the same thing* to me.

(8) Numeral Phrases, e. g.

We have to solve the problems *one by one.*

(9) Adjective Phrases, e. g.

*Weary with watching and anxiety,* he at length fell asleep.

(10) Adverbial Phrases, e. g.

Cars can easily *go up and down.*

2) A clause is a group of words that, introduced by a connective (what, that, etc.), contains a subject and a predicate. Like a phrase, it can only play a single part of

a sentence, e. g.

*I am not aware that I have done wrong.*

Clauses are divided into:

- (1) Subject Clauses
- (2) Predicative Clauses
- (3) Object Clauses
- (4) Attributive Clauses
- (5) Appositive Clauses
- (6) Adverbial Clauses

(See Chapter XXII.)

3) A sentence usually consists of a group of words that contains a subject and a predicate. It has intonation and expresses a more or less complete thought. In every sentence, the first letter of the first word should be capitalized and there must be a punctuation mark after the last word, e. g.

*Honestly, I don't think much of your idea.*

Classified by use, sentences may be divided into:

- (1) Declarative Sentences
- (2) Interrogative Sentences
- (3) Imperative Sentences
- (4) Exclamatory Sentences

(See Chapter XXI.)

**Classified by structure, sentences are of three kinds:**

- (1) Simple Sentences**
- (2) Compound Sentences**
- (3) Complex Sentences**

**(See Chapter XXII.)**



## Exercises

I. Tell the part of speech of each word in italics in the following:

### 1. What to Do About Difficulties

Suppose *that* we have planted a row of trees *along* the roadside. *Naturally* we want them to grow, and to grow *well*, but there are *strong* winds in summer and in winter which can easily *blow* the young trees *down*. So *there* we have a *difficulty*. What must we do *then*? We must put up a pole *beside* each tree to hold it *up*. With the poles supporting them, the trees can stand against the winds. In *this* way the difficulty can be overcome and the tree will grow *better*.

Now *imagine* that we have not had any rain for months. The trees will soon die of *thirst*. They need water. But the *nearest well* is *about* fifteen minutes' walk from the trees. It will take *much* time and a lot of people to get *enough* water for all those trees. So here is *another* difficulty. What should we do? We should dig a *small* ditch to link up the well and the trees. Then we can *draw* the water from the well and make it go along the ditch to