

LW Giggins
DF Shoebridge

Tense Drills



Longman



W. Giggins/D. J. Shoebridge

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TENSE DRILLS



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Introduction

The teacher of English as a second or foreign language is usually well aware that an oral approach to learning is the best one, yet he is not uncommonly in a position where suitable oral material is difficult to come by. Oral work has to be controlled and disciplined, and each particular point has to be pressed home by frequent drilling. It is the aim of this book to provide such oral material for systematic practice in the use of the tenses.

How to use the book

ARRANGEMENT

For convenience, the tenses are dealt with in a conventional sequence (Present, Past, Future) and are graded Elementary, Intermediate or Advanced. This grading indicates the level at which the particular use may be introduced, though many units marked Elementary may profitably be used with Intermediate students and those marked Intermediate (or even Elementary) with Advanced students for revision or remedial purposes.

METHOD *method.*

From the above, it will be understood that the book is not intended to be worked through unit by unit, nor even that the units marked Elementary or those marked Intermediate should be worked through in order. For example, all the drills on the Past Perfect Simple are marked Intermediate, yet it is not necessary or desirable to practise them consecutively in one group. Certain tenses or uses of tenses may usefully be compared and practised in conjunction with others; where this involves two separate units in this book (e.g. Units 18 and 26), a note in one unit refers the teacher to the other so that they may be practised together.

To a certain extent, the teacher may find it desirable to adapt sentences to suit his class; bracketed words and alternatives within a sentence are intended to show where this may be necessary. If, for example, the book is being used outside England, it is clearly unsuitable to ask 'When did you come to England?' (Unit 16, Section A); the word *England* may be substituted by any other suitable name of a country or place. Similarly in Unit 7, the choice between *shirt/blouse* will depend on whether the question is directed at a male or female student; if the female student happens to be wearing a dress, the teacher should further adapt the question. The aim must be to make all questions directed at students as realistic as possible.

While the teacher is free to use these drills in the way that best suits the needs of his students, it is nevertheless important that he should follow closely the Method set out at the head of the units. In units where there is no Method given, the drills are straightforward and the Example

is sufficient to show how they should be done. The teacher should insist on accuracy in the students' responses, but at the same time these must be as fluent and natural as possible. The responses in certain drills depend for their full effect on correct stress and intonation, and the students will often need help from the teacher in this respect. In some cases, where stress is of great importance for the correct understanding of the response, a note concerning this has been included before the drill. It is also important that the students should know what they are practising and why, and the teacher should always explain the Aim of the unit (with reference to the Example) before beginning it.

TYPES OF DRILL

The drills are of different types: Question and Answer, Conversion and Completion. Quite apart from the necessity to practise certain things in certain ways, it is hoped that this will provide variety. It will also be noticed that different drills aim to practise different aspects of a tense. For some of the tenses there are initial drills consisting of questions and answers relating to actions performed in the classroom; the purpose of these is to demonstrate more clearly the fundamental use and meaning of a particular tense. Other drills aim to practise the forms of a tense (e.g. Question and Negative forms) or the pronunciation of particular forms (e.g. the 3rd Person singular *-s*, *-es*, or the *-d*, *-ed* of the Past Tense). Very often tense usage is closely related to particular sentence structures; consequently there are drills to practise the use of a tense with different conjunctions and adverbs (e.g. the Past Continuous with *just as*; the Present Perfect with *yet*, *still*, *ever/never*, etc.; the Past Perfect with *until*, *already*, *no sooner*).

CUES

Wherever possible, drills should be done without the students looking at their books. In a number of units cues are provided and for these books may be used; however, as soon as the students have become familiar with the form of the drill and the responses required, the drill should be repeated with books closed, the teacher prompting with cues only when a student needs help. In some cases Advanced students may like to make their own responses; this should be encouraged whenever possible (e.g. Unit 63).

In cases where the students have no books, the cues may be used in various other ways. Teachers may wish to make tapes for these drills for use with a recorder or in a language laboratory. Alternatively, the cues may be written on the blackboard before practice begins, or the teacher may call out each cue after he has given the stimulus. With some of the drills, when the cue consists of a single word or short phrase (e.g. Units 64 and 69), the cues should be called out by the teacher whether the students have books or not.

WRITTEN WORK

Many of the drills provide suitable material for written work. When a drill has been practised orally (more than once if necessary), it may be given for written practice in class or as homework.

Perhaps a general word may be said here about drilling. It sounds so dull and impersonal. It need not be at all. If students understand the purpose and value of it, and see how, by its *varied repetition*, it assists them to produce correct structures as well as to grasp more clearly the functions of a tense, they will become enthusiastic for something that should, after all, be one of their main aims: accuracy and fluency in speaking English. Much depends on the teacher: if he finds the whole process boring, who can blame the students if they do too? If the teacher is fired with zeal for his task, then they may catch his enthusiasm.

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THE PRESENT CONTINUOUS

UNIT I

continuous Elementary

To present or revise the PRESENT CONTINUOUS used for
actions in the REAL PRESENT.

used for actions in the
Method Each group of actions should be taken separately as (set out) below. When the first group has been acted and repeated, the same method is followed with the second group, and so on.

The teacher does each action in the group and during each action he says what he is doing. He then repeats these actions, asking the students what he is doing. The students reply as in the example. The teacher should take care that the action is continued or repeated until the response has been made.

Example

TEACHER: (while walking to the window) I'm walking to the window.
(while looking out of the window) I'm looking out of the window. etc.

TEACHER: (while walking to the window) What am I doing?

STUDENT: You're walking to the window.

TEACHER: (while looking out of the window) What am I doing?

STUDENT: You're looking out of the window. etc.

● Drill

He walks to the window.
looks out of the window.
opens the window.
closes the window.
walks back to the desk.

He looks at Mr X.
points to Miss Y.
smiles at Mr Z.
carries a chair. *is away.*
drinks water.

He knocks on the desk.
winds his watch.
bends down.
pulls up his socks.
ties his shoelace.

He cuts a piece of paper. *who can answer*
holds up his hand.
draws on the blackboard. *the question*
cries. *is crying*
laughs. *is crying*

He reads a book. *is reading*
turns over the pages of the book.
writes on the blackboard.
wipes the blackboard.
jumps (up and down.)

keep

2 The Present Continuous

If the drill is being used for revision purposes, more advanced vocabulary may be introduced.

He scratches his head.

coughs.

blows his nose.

yawns.

stretches.

He brushes his jacket.

shakes hands with Mr Y.

waves his handkerchief.

leans against the wall.

folds/tears a piece of paper. etc.

UNIT 2

Elementary

To practise the PRESENT CONTINUOUS (affirmative and negative) for actions in the REAL PRESENT.

Note The teacher should insist on the correct contractions throughout the drill. In particular, students should use the form he/she isn't instead of the form he/she's not. (Although the latter would be correct, it is less usual.)

Depend

Example

TEACHER TO STUDENT A: Stand on your right leg.

TEACHER TO STUDENT B: Ask him if he's standing on his left leg.

STUDENT B: Are you standing on your left leg?

STUDENT A: No, I'm not.

*TEACHER TO STUDENT B: } What does he say?

STUDENT B: He says he isn't standing on his left leg.

TEACHER TO STUDENT B: Ask him what he's doing.

STUDENT B: What are you doing?

STUDENT A: I'm standing on my right leg.

*TEACHER TO STUDENT B: What does he say?

STUDENT B: He says he's standing on his right leg.

TEACHER TO STUDENT B: Is he standing on his left leg?

STUDENT B: No, he isn't.

*It should be possible to leave out 'What does he say?' after a few examples.

● Drill

sitting on the table:

writing with his right hand:

pointing to a window:

writing with a blue pen:

holding up his right hand:

looking at Mr X:

sitting on a chair.

writing with his left hand.

pointing to the door.

writing with a red pen.

holding up his left hand.

looking at Miss Y.

now
reading from a green book:

shaking hands with Mr Y:

eating a sweet:

drawing a house (on the blackboard):

cutting the paper with scissors:

scratching his head:

tapping the desk:

leaning against the wall:

holding the book in his right hand:

wiping the blackboard:

cleaning his glasses:

kneeling on the chair:

carrying a handbag:

reading from a blue book.

shaking hands with Mr Z.

eating a biscuit.

drawing a ship.

cutting the paper with a knife.

scratching his back.

tapping the wall.

leaning on the desk.

holding the book in his left hand.

wiping the window.

cleaning his shoes.

kneeling on the floor.

carrying a book.

UNIT 3

Elementary and Intermediate

To practise the REAL PRESENT with less demonstrable ideas, and with a variety of subjects.

Example

TEACHER TO STUDENT A: Ask him if he's listening to the teacher.

STUDENT A TO STUDENT B: Are you listening to the teacher?

STUDENT B: Yes, I am.

(or) No, I'm not.

TEACHER TO STUDENT A: What does he say?

STUDENT A: He says he's listening to the teacher.

(or) He says he isn't listening to the teacher.

● Drill

Are you enjoying your English classes?

Are you living at home?

Are you paying attention?

Are you sitting comfortably?

Are you trying hard?

Are you learning a lot of English?

Are you feeling hot/cold?

Are you sitting in your usual place? *in the place where you always*

Are you looking forward to the holidays?

Are you longing for the weekend?

Are you sitting next to your friend?

Are you thinking about (France, Persia, your sister, etc.)?

Are you wearing a clean (shirt, blouse, etc.)?

Are you attending to the lesson?

Are you carrying a comb in your pocket?

Stand!

4 The Present Continuous

The teacher should explain that in the following examples there will be a variety of subjects.

- Are we doing an easy exercise?
Are they coming here?
Is Peter living in (London) at present?
Are they studying English at present?
Is she waiting for him?
Are we working hard?
Am I speaking clearly enough?
Are they attending school?
Is David taking an exam now?
Are they travelling down from (London)?
Am I talking properly?
Is Susan cooking your lunch at the moment?
Are they wearing hats?
Is Philip behaving well? *z bi kadya*
Are we practising well?
Are they expecting a letter?

UNIT 4

Advanced

To practise the special use of the PRESENT CONTINUOUS

with always.

Note The Present Continuous is sometimes used with *always* (more rarely with *continually*, *for ever*) to emphasise the frequency with which an action is repeated: the speaker wishes to show that, in his opinion, this action occurs more frequently than is normal, and the feeling conveyed is usually one of surprise, irritation or criticism. Look at the following examples:

- (a) *I'm always seeing him on the bus.* (suggesting surprise)
- (b) *She's always changing her mind.* (suggesting irritation)
- (c) *He's always going to the doctor with some small complaint.* (criticism—it's nothing to do with me how often he goes, but he's wasting the doctor's valuable time)
- (d) *They're a very friendly people and are always smiling.* (statement of fact)

However, people's reactions to what happens vary, and circumstances also may affect our reactions; it is therefore important in this drill that each student should decide for himself which feeling he wishes to convey and that he should try to convey this by correct intonation. Notice that there should always be a stress on *always*, the heavier the stress the greater the feeling of surprise or irritation. (See Unit 34, p. 51, for the use of *always* with the Past Continuous.)

Example

TEACHER: He teases the dog very, very often.

STUDENT: He's always teasing the dog.

● *Drill*

He plays the piano all the time.

He makes mistakes all the time.

She has accidents very, very often.

He argues with me all the time.

He goes to the pictures too much.

She has parties very, very often.

She tells me about her family all the time.

You forget to bring your book very, very often.

He smiles all the time.

She loses her glasses very often.

He complains about his work too much.

She buys new clothes very, very often.

She goes up to (London) very, very often.

He talks about television programmes too much.

She asks for advice very often.

He makes silly remarks all the time.

He borrowes money too often.

She talks about her neighbours too much.

He makes trouble all the time. ~~very~~

She tells us how clever her husband is too often.

Our radio goes wrong all the time.

She interferes with things all the time.

This clock stops nearly every day.

She ladders her stockings all the time.

He boasts about his garden all the time.

Our car breaks down very often.

She grumbles about her health all the time.

This zip comes undone all the time.

She has her hair done too often.

This pen runs out all the time.

He bites his nails all the time.

She rings me up very, very often.

This 'necklace breaks very often.

He comes home after midnight too often.

She criticises me all the time.

THE SIMPLE PRESENT

UNIT 5

Elementary

To present or revise the HABITUAL PRESENT and practise the form of the tense.

Example

*Stage One

TEACHER TO STUDENT A: How many cups of coffee do you drink every day?

STUDENT A: I drink . . . cups of coffee every day.

Stage Two

TEACHER TO STUDENT B: Ask A how many cups of coffee he drinks every day.

STUDENT B TO STUDENT A: How many cups of coffee do you drink every day?

STUDENT A: I drink . . . cups of coffee every day.

*TEACHER TO STUDENT B: What does he say?

STUDENT B: He says he drinks . . . cups of coffee every day.

Stage Three

TEACHER TO STUDENT B: Ask him if he drinks (different number) cups of coffee every day.

STUDENT B TO STUDENT A: Do you drink (different number) cups of coffee every day?

STUDENT A: No, I don't.

*TEACHER TO STUDENT B: What does he say?

STUDENT B: He says he doesn't drink (different number) cups of coffee every day.

*It should be possible to omit these parts after a few examples.

●Drill

How many times do you go to the cinema every month?

How many meals do you eat every day?

How many letters do you write every month?

How many hours do you spend in school every day?

How many times do you have your hair cut every month?

How many times do you clean your teeth every day?

How often do you wash your hair every month?

How long do you work every day?

How many days do you attend school every week?

How do you come to school?