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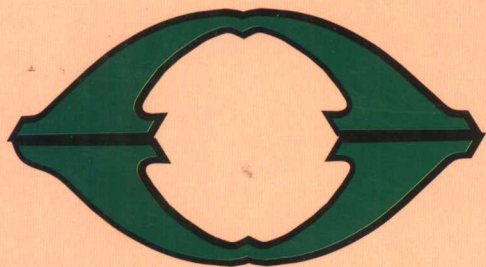
INTENSIVE READING

上海外语教育出版社高等学校教材
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A TRUE ENGLISH CLASSROOM

全英文课堂

大学英语精读课题研究组
丛书主编 万 之



全

英文授课，是提高英语学习效率的最佳途径
也是英语教学的趋势与必然

英文授课，不仅倍增英文信息获取量
而且引导你用英文思考

早一天适应全英文教学环境
早一天进入英语学习的自由王国

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A TRUE ENGLISH CLASSROOM

大学英语精读

全英文课堂

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——万之

2002.8

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Unit 1

A Kind of Sermon

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I. Learning Target

I). Key Words and Expressions:

Words: scope, context, fluency, dedication, disgust, hopefully, guidance, refuge, quote, counter, recognition, immediate, define, practicable.

Expressions: amount to, wash one's hands of, rely on

II). Grammar:

1. feel (be) inclined to do
2. (be) no use telling sb. to do sth.

III). Reading Skills:

Paragraph Analysis: Identifying Paragraph Topics

Every well-written paragraph has a topic. The topic tells what the entire paragraph is about. The topic can be a complete sentence or just a phrase. It can be long or short. The important thing is that the topic should include the principal points of the entire paragraph.

IV). Text:

The author seeks to help teachers of Advanced English as a foreign language in their difficult task of teaching advanced students, their task of leading their students to a higher level of ability and fluency. The text can be divided into three parts:

1. Section one (Para. 1) : The seemingly great difficulty in learning English as students move to more advanced levels.
2. Section two (Para. 2 – 3) : The teacher's frustration at finding his students making slower progress and the reactions of both students and teachers in such circumstances.
3. Section three (Para 4 – 6) : The author's opinion about the problem and his advice.

V). **Writing Skills:**

Précis Writing

A précis is a brief summary, written in your own words, of a longer piece of writing. It is a condensed version of the essential content of the original material. A précis contains no comments or opinions of your own. It contains no details, no examples or illustrations. The language should be clear and concise, with all unnecessary words left out. It should be the shortest possible account of what you have read.

II . Background Information of the Text

The language appears to consist of a bewildering variety of idioms, clichés and accepted phrases with different meanings in different contexts.

Many English words and expressions may carry not just a single meaning. They mean different things in different contexts. For instance, you get over a fence by climbing, but you get over an illness if you recover from it. You get off a bus by stepping down from it, while you get off lightly when you escape punishment.

The following example of the ways "get" and its combinations used may sound a bit artificial and extreme, but it is not impossible :

"I got (was given) a job at which I got (made / earned) \$3 a week, but I never really got (became) interested in it, and I soon got the sack (was dismissed from my job). I wasn't sorry, because my employer had always got on my nerves (irritated me), but finally he got my back up (infuriated me). When he told me to get out (leave), I got quite a lot off my chest (poured it all forth with bitter feeling). I told him that if he had got (taken) it into his head that he could get along (manage) by paying me such a small sum, he would get a surprise (be surprised). He told me that I was getting out of hand (becoming difficult to control), and that I had got ideas above my station (had come to believe myself more important than I really was). When I told my father the whole story that evening I got a good hiding (received a

sound beating). ”

Of course, the above example is intended primarily to call your attention to the fact that the same word or expression may mean different things in different contexts and that English idioms may be quite annoying. Now that you have reached the advanced level, you must be aware of the difficulties of learning them and try to get over them.

III. Summary of the Text

By now you have done a pretty good job in learning English, but there are still big gaps in your knowledge. Small wonder you are keen to improve. However, you may feel that improving your English is becoming more and more difficult at this stage and may even feel a little discouraged. But the teachers are no happier. In fact, they may often feel frustrated at not being able to help their students make greater progress.

Why, then, can beginners make more obvious progress? This is because they are learning basic vocabulary and basic structures and can put them into practice without much difficulty. When students reach the advanced stage, they are confronted with a puzzling variety of idioms and phrases and complex structures. They will then find themselves at a loss what to do with them or how to use them. As a result, they may tend to think, “The more I learn, the less I know,” although they are in fact getting a little bit more proficient with each passing day.

Keenly aware of the problems faced by learners, the author offers his advice to both teachers and students on how to learn English at this stage.

IV. Key Words and Expressions

1. **scope** *n.* the area within the limits of a question, subject, action, etc.; range
e. g. — — The politics of a country would be outside the scope of a book for tourists.

— — Few things are beyond the scope of a child's imagination.

[Regular phrases] the scope of a book / an investigation of wide scope / beyond the scope of

2. **context** *n.*

(1) words that come before and after a word, phrase, statement, etc., helping to show what its meaning is.

e. g. -- "Mad" can mean "foolish", "insane", or "angry", depending on the context.

-- Without a context, I would have assumed it was written by a man.

(2) circumstances in which sth. happens or in which sth. is to be considered

e. g. -- The report should be considered within its social context.

-- This is the context in which President Bill Clinton must decide his policy.

[Regular phrases] quote a remark out of its context

3. **fluency** *n.* quality or condition of being fluent

e. g. -- Silas speaks Chinese with great fluency.

-- To work as a translator, you need fluency in at least one foreign language.

-- Rosa was praised for her speeches of remarkable fluency.

[derivative] fluent adj. e. g. a fluent speaker / speak fluent French

[Regular phrases] speak with fluency

4. **dedication** *n.* devotion to a cause or an aim

e. g. -- He has always shown great dedication to the cause of humanity, justice and peace.

-- Professor Smith and his colleagues had the dedication to continue their research in spite of the obstacles.

[derivative] dedicate vt. e. g. He dedicated his life to the service of his country.

[Regular phrases] dedicate ... to / dedicated to sb.

5. **disgust** *n.* strong feeling of dislike, and disapproval at a situation or person's behavior, etc.; a feeling of being ill caused by sth. unpleasant.

e. g. -- He was filled with disgust at what he had witnessed in the prisons.

-- She turned away in disgust when she caught sight of the rotting food.

[derivative] disgusting adj. e. g. disgusting behavior

[Regular phrases] be disgusted at/ by/ with + strongly dislike sb. or sth.)

6. **hopefully** *adv.*

(1) in a hopeful way; in a way that shows that you are hopeful

e. g. -- "Will there be any food left over?" he asked hopefully (= wishing the answer to be yes).

-- "Am I welcome?" He smiled hopefully, leaning on the door.

(2) it is to be hoped; let us hope

e. g. -- Hopefully (= I hope that) we'll arrive before dark.

-- Hopefully we can solve the problem.

[derivative] hope *n.* / hopeful *adj.*

[Derivative Phrases] beyond / past hope (no hope at all); hope against hope (with the last hope); in hopes of / in the hope that pin / lay one's hope(s) on (rely one's hope on sth.)

7. **guidance** *n.* help and advice given to sb. about their work, education, personal life, etc.; direction.

e. g. -- I went to a career counselor for guidance on how to start my job search.

-- My professor gave me a lot of helpful guidance when I was writing up my Ph D.

[derivative] guide *n.* ① the one who leads the road direction. ② directory, guidance.

e. g. -- We take Deng Xiaoping Theory as our guide to action. ③ manual, guide book.

e. g. -- a guide to a museum.

8. **refuge** *n.* shelter or sanctuary; protection

e. g. -- It's beginning to rain; look, we can take refuge in the hut.

-- When she is sad, Ann takes refuge in remembering happier times.

[derivative] refugee *n.* e. g. a political refugee / a refugee camp / a refugee government

[Regular phrases] take refuge in (a place) / seek refuge from the floods / take refuge in silence

9. **quote** *vt.*

(1) repeat exactly what sb. else has said or written

e. g. -- He quoted Mr. Green as saying that peace negotiations were already underway.

-- To quote an old saying, every dog has his day.

(2) mention (sb./sth.) in support of a statement

e. g. -- Can you quote (me) an example of what you mean?

[derivative] quotation *n.*

[Regular phrases] quote a verse from the bible / quote the bible

10. **counter** *vt.* oppose; move or act in opposition to (sth.)

e. g. -- Little did I expect that George would counter my proposal with one of his own.

-- Sam's employer countered his request for more money by threatening

to dismiss him.

[derivative] counter *n.* ① counter of shops, banks, etc. ② chips used in gambles, games. ③ arithmometer.

counter *adv.* oppose (to), the other way round, the opposite direction (to).

e. g. -- to act counter to a person's wishes.

11. **recognition** *n.* perceive, (be perceived); acknowledge, (be acknowledged); acquaintanceship.

e. g. -- The town has altered beyond recognition since I saw it last. It has been changed so greatly that it is difficult to recognize places in it.

-- It changed beyond of all recognition.

[derivative] recognize *vt.* to know, to approve, to identify.

12. **immediate** *adj.*

(1) with nothing coming in between; direct

e. g. -- The immediate cause of her death is unknown.

(2) happening or done at once; existing at the present time

e. g. -- The response of the people to the famine appeal was immediate.

-- I have no immediate plans to leave.

[derivative] immediately *adv.*

[Regular phrases] the immediate cause (the direct cause or the latest cause) / one's immediate superior (one's direct leader) / immediate delivery / immediate shipment / immediate knowledge

13. **define** *vt.* state precisely the meaning of (a word, etc.); state (sth.) clearly; explain (sth.)

e. g. -- Each of us might define the concept of freedom in a very different way.

-- The powers of the President are clearly defined in the Constitution.

-- It's hard to define exactly what has changed.

[derivative] definite *adj.* ① clear and specific. ② determinate, affirmative.

definition *n.* ① explication, explanation ② demarcation, restriction.

[Regular phrases] define sb.'s duty / define one's position (表明立场)

14. **practicable** *adj.* capable of being used or put into practice; workable

e. g. -- "Let's take the baby when we climb Mount Tai." "Is that practicable?"

-- Is it practicable to try to grow crops in deserts?

[Analysis] practicable vs. practical: People are beginning to use "practical" in the same sense as "practicable"; a practical / practicable plan or suggestion is one that will work. Note, however, that "practicable" is not used of people.

15. **amount to**: be equal to; seem to be in fact
- e. g. -- Keeping what belongs to another without permission amounts to stealing.
- What he has just said on the subject doesn't amount to much.
- Whether I pay or whether my wife pays amounts to the same thing, because we share all our money.
16. **wash one's hands of**: refuse to be connected with or responsible for
- e. g. -- I washed my hands of their schemes when I discovered what they were up to.
- That's your affair -- I wash my hands of the whole business.
17. **rely on**: count or depend on (sb./sth.); have trust or confidence in (sb./sth.)
- e. g. -- Jim always relies on his wife for advice on clothes. She cannot be relied on to tell the truth.
- I think we can rely on Ruth not to tell anyone about it.

V. Difficult Sentences

1. ... to appreciate the reasons. ... to understand the reasons
- appreciate*: be aware of; be sensitive to
- e. g. -- Do you fully appreciate the risk you are taking?
- He is a trained musician who can appreciate even very small differences in sounds.
2. ... a process which ought to become simple does not appear to do so: ... this period of English learning at which it should be easier for students does not appear to be so. Note here "a process" refers to the learning process students go through after they have mastered the basic structures and patterns of English.
- 1) *process*: connected series of actions, changes, etc. esp. such as are involuntary or unconscious.
- e. g. -- For a doctor it is important to know the process of digestion.
- 2) *appear to do so*: appear to be so.
3. ... becomes frustrated when his efforts appear to produce less obvious results. ... becomes discouraged when his efforts appear to produce less obvious results than expected.
- 1) *frustrated*: disappointed; discouraged
- e. g. -- And with these students he feels frustrated, inadequate, and even an-

gry.

-- My sister had a frustrated look when Dad said she must stay at home.

2) *produce less obvious results*: produce less obvious results than expected

4. **confronted with**: faced with; brought face to face with

e. g. -- The young scientists didn't lose heart when confronted with serious setbacks in their research work.

-- November is here, and I am confronted with a long winter before me.

Note: when "confront" is used alone, it stands for "be or come face to face with".

e. g. -- The difficulties that confront us seem insuperable.

-- A soldier has to confront danger.

In addition, "confront" means "be opposite to".

e. g. -- My house confronts his.

5. ... **the vast untouched area of English vocabulary and usage** ...: the vast area of English vocabulary and usage that has not been reached.

1) *untouched*: change "touch" to an *adj.* by adding postfix "-ed", then add prefix "un". The same process can be used on many verbs, such like "uninterested, uninterrupted, uninhibited, unmoved, etc."

2) *vocabulary*: total number of words which (with rules for combining them) make up a language.

[Thesaurus] words and phrases, terms, glossary, lexicon, etc.

6. **idioms**: An idiom is a habitual collocation of two or more words whose combined meaning is not deducible from a knowledge of its component parts and their grammatical relations to each other, but must be learnt as a whole. To be "hard up", for example, is an English idiom meaning to be short of money.

Now try to work out the meaning of the following sentence:

e. g. -- He's a real pain in the neck, and I'm fed up to the teeth with the mess he's landed us in.

(He is really irritating, and I'm utterly disgusted with the trouble he has got us into.)

7. **clichés**: overworked words or phrases; idea or expression that has been too much used and is now outdated.

For example, "Father Time," "white as snow," and "cheeks like roses" are clichés. Such expressions as these have been used so often that they have lost much of their expressive force.

8. **reduced to trying to explain the inexplicable**: obliged to explain what can't be explained.

1) *reduce to* (*usu. pass.*): force (sb.) into (doing sth. humble, unpleasant, or dishonorable)

e. g. -- Alone and unsupported, the old lady was reduced to begging for her living.

-- After a violent earthquake hit the district many people in the locality were reduced to sleeping in the open.

2) *inexplicable*: *adj.* that can not be explained.

e. g. -- His hatred to his step-mother seems inexplicable.

-- Up to now the UFO phenomenon is still inexplicable.

9. **more respectfully if less grammatically**: In the first quoted proverb the student is compared to a horse while in the second no such comparison is made; hence "more respectfully". However, the second proverb is less grammatical. In standard English it might read, "It isn't what you say but the way you say it that matters."

10. **"It isn't what you say. It's the way that you say it"**: The important thing is not what you say but the way that you say it. Much the same thing can be said in a variety of grammatically correct sentences, but some may be more appropriate than others in certain situations in terms of politeness, formality, etc. For example, to say "I have insufficient financial resources for the journey" might sound appropriate in a formal situation. But it would sound out of place except as a joke, if it were said at home or to close friends. In ordinary circumstances, "I haven't got enough money for the trip" would be an appropriate way of saying the same thing. The above example just goes to show, when it comes to choosing your words, "It isn't what you say. It's the way that you say it."

11. **His students might feel inclined to counter these with...**: His students might wish to oppose these remarks with...

feel inclined to: feel likely or wish to do sth.

e. g. -- I feel inclined to think that she will say bye-bye to me.

-- I don't feel specially inclined to talk to him.

12. **...which amounts to washing one's hands of them**: ... which means that teachers don't have to be responsible.

13. **... wide reading is the best alternative course of action...**: ... wide range reading is the best substitution course of action.