

UNDERSTANDING
& USING
ENGLISH
GRAMMAR

BETTY SCHRAMPFER AZAR

UNDERSTANDING AND USING ENGLISH GRAMMAR

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Preface

Understanding and Using English Grammar is a developmental skills text for intermediate through advanced students of English as a second language. It presents, in terms easily accessible to students, the forms, meanings, and usage levels (colloquial through very formal) of basic structures in English grammar. The presentations are accompanied by oral and written exercises of many types and purposes: the exercises range from simple manipulation to situational and idiomatic usage, from controlled response to open communicative interaction. The contexts in the exercises are at times directed toward university students but are, for the most part, of interest to any adult.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to express my gratitude to Barbara Matthies for her detailed examination of early versions of the manuscript. Her contributions to the quality of the text have been myriad. My gratitude also goes to Donald A. Azar for the support and encouragement he provided both personally and professionally during the several years it took to complete this project. Finally, I wish to express my great appreciation to my students through the years. This text has been written for them, because of them, and with their help.

Notes to the Teacher

1. In general, each chapter is organized around one area of structure, building from basic structures to related structures and usages. The text is designed to be taught in the order in which it is presented; however, the integration of material is not so extensive as to preclude your rearranging the order of presentation to suit your purposes and the needs of the class.

2. For the most part, charts consisting of examples accompanied by explanations precede exercises. The amount of preparation a class needs prior to doing an exercise depends upon the level of the class. With intermediate students, it is usually desirable for you to discuss the grammar charts in class as well as to bring your own examples to class. With an advanced group, you may wish to assign the charts for out-of-class use and to proceed directly to the exercises in class, answering questions and discussing pertinent points as they arise.

3. Some of the exercises are designated ORAL (BOOKS CLOSED). It is important that the students not look at their texts during these exercises, no matter how much they might want to. Even intermediate students should soon learn to concentrate on what you are saying and respond quickly. ("Mind-writing" should be discouraged; instead, the students should be encouraged to open their mouths and see what happens. A mistake is not of earthshaking importance.) Be flexible in the responses you accept. The main criterion is whether or not the student has understood what you said and is producing the target structure competently and communicatively. Minor changes in wording are not important. Use the ORAL (BOOKS CLOSED) exercises freely. In many of these exercises, the entries are not intended

to be “read as is,” but rather are intended to prompt your mind as you engage your students (individually, not chorally) in short exchanges. Put entries into particular contexts where possible, as though you were initiating a conversation; pursue interesting responses, grammar aside; add entries that are directly relevant to your class and the here-and-now classroom context; delete irrelevant entries; encourage the students to use the exercises for out-of-class practice; use part of an exercise one day and part another day if you wish; return to the exercises from previously covered chapters for quick reviews at the beginning of a class period.

The symbol(. . .) indicates that you are to supply the name of a class member. Place and time expressions are often in parentheses, indicating that you are to supply an expression relevant to the people in your class.

The exercises designated ORAL are to be done with books open but require no writing and no preparation.

4. In many of the exercises there is often more than one possible response. Differences between two (or more) viable responses are opportunities for discussion. At times an exercise entry may involve a difference in meaning: *In her lifetime she has never seen snow.* versus *In her lifetime she never saw snow.* At other times the difference lies in usage level: *He's taller than I.* versus *He's taller than me.* Sometimes the difference may involve comparing a strictly grammatically correct response with an idiomatic or situationally appropriate response: *What do you call yourself?* versus *What is your name?*

5. Some of the exercises are designated WRITTEN. The intention is for the students to use their own paper and submit these exercises to you. Some of the WRITTEN exercises require sentence completion, but for the most part they are designed to produce short informal compositions. Generally the topics or tasks concern aspects of the students' own lives in order to encourage free and relatively effortless communication as the students practice their writing skills. While a course in English rhetoric is beyond the scope of this text, many of the elements of such are included and may be developed and emphasized according to your purposes.

APPENDIX 3 presents a system for marking errors so that students may make their own corrections and so that you may mark papers quickly and efficiently.

6. One of the intentions of the text has been to intersperse topics of interest throughout the exercises to stimulate short discussions. When possible, take time in class to pursue these topics: animal ecology, UFO's, male and female roles, dating customs, table manners, and so on.

7. The students' attention should be directed to APPENDIX 1, BASIC GRAMMAR TERMINOLOGY, at the beginning of the term.

8. APPENDIX 2 contains lists of the preposition combinations used in the exercises at the end of most of the chapters. However, the students should be encouraged to use their ears when completing the exercises rather than to consult a list. If you have time in class, play around with the preposition combinations,

especially the two-word verbs, so that the students have the opportunity to become comfortable with them and to use them creatively.

9. There is no separate unit on articles, but article usage is incorporated into various exercises. In addition, the intention is that you work on article usage daily in the students' oral and written productions, with a minimum of explanation (if any at all). The ORAL (BOOKS CLOSED) exercises provide especially good opportunities for dealing with problems of article usage.

10. An answer key is available. It contains the expected and/or possible responses to the exercises plus a few comments and suggestions.

Understanding and Using English Grammar is intended to be practical, useful, and fun—for both student and teacher. I hope you enjoy using it, and I would enjoy hearing from you.

BETTY S. AZAR

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Questions

EXERCISE 1: Ask another member of the class a question about the given topic. With the rest of the class, discuss how this question might best be asked idiomatically (i.e., the way in which a native speaker might normally ask for this information in this situation).

Example: age

Response: How old are you?

1. name
2. spelling of name
3. date of birth
4. marital status
5. country of origin
6. capital city
7. location of country
8. population
9. government
10. weather
11. size of family
12. native language
13. other languages
14. length of time in (this city or country), both past and future
15. reason for coming here
16. field of study
17. residence at present
18. length of time at this residence
19. distance of residence from school
20. transportation to school
21. number of classes this term
(semester, quarter, session, etc.)
22. names of courses
23. length of time spent in class each day
24. spare-time activities and interests
25. general well-being and adjustment to living here

EXERCISE 2: Interview another student in the class. Take notes during the interview and then introduce this student to the rest of the class. (*Question for discussion:* Is it appropriate for you to ask another student for his/her date of birth?)

1-1 FORMS OF YES/NO AND INFORMATION QUESTIONS

A *yes/no question* = a question that may be answered by *yes* or *no*.

Question: Does he live in Chicago? *Answer:* Yes, he does. OR: No, he doesn't.

An *information question* = a question that asks for information by using a question word. *Question:* Where does he live? *Answer:* In Chicago.

	QUESTION WORD	AUXILIARY VERB	SUBJECT	MAIN VERB*	
(a) She lives there.		Does	she	live	there?
(b) They live there.	Where	does	she	live?	
(c) He lived there.		Do	they	live	there?
	Where	do	they	live?	
		Did	he	live	there?
	Where	did	he	live?	
(d) He is living there.		Is	he	living	there?
(e) They have lived there.	Where	is	he	living?	
(f) Mary can live there.		Have	they	lived	there?
(g) He will be living there.	Where	have	they	lived?	
		Can	Mary	live	there?
	Where	can	Mary	live?	
		Will	he	be living	there?
	Where	will	he	be living?	
(h) John lives there.	—	—	Who	lives	there?
(i) Mary came.	—	—	Who	came?	
(j) They are there.		Are	they		there?
(k) Jim was there.	Where	are	they?		
		Was	Jim		there?
	Where	was	Jim?		

*See Appendix 1 for basic grammar terminology (*subject, verb, etc.*)

EXERCISE 3: For each of the following, make a yes/no question, then an information question using *where*.

Example: They can stay there.

Response: Can they stay there? Where can they stay?

1. She stays there. _____
2. She is staying there. _____
3. She will stay there. _____
4. She is going to stay there. _____
5. They stayed there. _____
6. They will be staying there. _____
7. They should stay there. _____
8. He has stayed there. _____
9. He has been staying there. _____
10. John is there. _____
11. John will be there. _____
12. John has been there. _____

(Repeat the exercise using who.)

EXERCISE 4: Make questions for the given answers.

- | | | |
|----------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. _____ | Does he live in Chicago? | Yes, he lives in Chicago. |
| 2. _____ | Do you live in Chicago? | Yes, I live in Chicago. |
| 3. _____ | | Yes, she took the bus. |
| 4. _____ | | Yes, he wants to come with us. |
| 5. _____ | | Yes, I am living in the dorm. |
| 6. _____ | | Yes, Jack and Steve went home. |
| 7. _____ | | Yes, her husband can speak English. |
| 8. _____ | | Yes, they were invited to the party. |
| 9. _____ | | Yes, I have met his wife. |