

Topic English

A short intermediate course

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Introduction

Aim

The aim of *Topic English* is to present by means of 'concepts' or 'topics' the structures etc. that students of intermediate level and above would generally need to master. The authors have tried to provide a stimulating variety of practice material, giving 85–100 hours of work, by means of which an intermediate student may gain real mastery of structures etc. already covered. It is not primarily intended for students who are meeting the bulk of these structures for the first time. The material in the book is particularly useful for short courses where heterogeneous groups of students are practising linguistic items at different levels at the same time.

Layout

Each Topic is divided into three sections:

Part I consists of a dialogue exemplifying the use of the four or five basic structures in a lively and colloquial manner, and is followed by:

AI: comprehension questions on the dialogue.

BI–FI: varied practice-material exercising the basic structures, with a continuity of theme (e.g. parties, travel) where possible.

Part II (BII–FII) is a development of Part I with further, more difficult material, giving more extended practice in the same structures but involving the use of more advanced vocabulary. In this way the student is required to think about what he is saying.

Part III is a more 'open' or 'free' interpretation of the topic, and consists of:

AIII: a reading passage, often involving considerably more difficult vocabulary, followed by general questions.

BIII–FIII: further activities enabling the more advanced student to treat the original structures more imaginatively.

How to use the book

Topic English can be used in a variety of ways according to the needs of teachers and students. Each unit may either be worked through in the normal manner ('horizontally', see arrow X in diagram on next page) or by using only part of each unit ('vertically', see arrow Y). This second method, while not giving such intensive

practice of a concept, still gives the student a complete review of the structures and would suit those who are limited by either ability or time:

	Y ↓ Part I	Part II	Part III
UNIT I			
X - UNIT II			
UNIT III			

↓

Thus intermediate students on a 3-week course would work through the book vertically, perhaps doing only Part I (and selecting the parallel exercises from Part II where time allows or there is need for further practice) whereas more advanced intermediate students would spend the same period covering Parts I and II of each unit. Similarly intermediate students on a 5-week course might use Parts I and II of each unit thus:

	Intermediate	Advanced-Intermediate
3 weeks	I	I + II
5 weeks	I + some of II	I + II + some of III
10 or more weeks	I + II + III	I + II + III

Even students who have achieved mastery of the structures or who feel no need of the more controlled practice of Parts I and II can get great benefit from using just Part III of each unit as a source of ideas for fruitful language practice.

TOPIC 1: Aims and Purposes

Mr Bantam, young Mr Gresham ('Gresh') and Grandma Groat

- Bantam:** So you want to marry my daughter, young man?
Gresh: That's right.
Bantam: You're both a little young, aren't you?
Gresh: Well, we're not children.
Bantam: Hm—what about a job? What do you do for a living?
Gresh: Ah well—just at the moment I don't.
Bantam: You don't live?
Gresh: No, no—I mean I don't work.
Bantam: Oh I see. You're a gentleman of leisure, are you?
Grandma: Oh, that's nice.
Bantam: Be quiet, Grandma.
Gresh: No. I'm out of work.
Bantam: Out of work? How do you intend to keep a wife if you're unemployed?
Gresh: I don't mean to stay unemployed, and I don't intend to let my wife work.
Bantam: I'm very pleased to hear it—will you be going into business?
Gresh: Business? No, not business. I thought about it. I was going to be a millionaire, but it costs too much.
Grandma: Oh yes, it's very expensive being a millionaire.
Bantam: Be quiet, Grandma. Hmm—so you're not thinking of working in the City then?
Gresh: No.
Bantam: Pity.
Gresh: I don't see why.
Bantam: I think a man should have a steady job so as to be able to support a family.
Gresh: Oh, I hope to have a steady job.
Bantam: Good. I'm relieved to hear it.
Gresh: We're intending to get married next month.
Grandma: Oh, how nice! A wedding.
Bantam: Be quiet, Grandma. You intend to get married next month?
Gresh: That's right, so that we can move into our new house.
Bantam: Hmm—where are you planning to live?
Gresh: There's a house that goes with the job.
Bantam: But you're out of work.
Gresh: No, I mean the job I'm going to do.
Bantam: I see.
Gresh: We're going to move in once I start work. We both like the house.
Bantam: That's very good news.
Gresh: To be honest, I'm only taking the job in order to get the house.
Bantam: Well, if it's a nice house—
Gresh: Oh it is. After we move in we're going to paint everything pink.
Bantam: Good Lord! You've got it all planned out, haven't you?

Gresh: Oh yes, we've planned everything already so as not to waste a moment when we move in.
Bantam: I see. And what kind of job is it going to be?
Gresh: Prime Minister.
Bantam: Prime Minister?
Gresh: That's right.
Grandma: Well, well, well. We had a young man here last week who was going to be the Archbishop of Canterbury.
Bantam: Be quiet, Grandma.

A I ASK AND ANSWER

1. Ask how Gresh is going to solve the problem of not having a job.
2. Ask if Gresh will be working in the City.
3. Ask what 'the City' is.
4. Ask why Mr Bantam thinks a son-in-law should have a steady job.
5. Ask why Gresh is taking the job.
6. Ask what colour the young couple are going to paint their house when they move in.
7. Ask why they've planned everything already.
8. Ask what job Gresh hopes to get.
9. Ask how Gresh intends to keep a wife.
10. Ask what the previous young man was going to do.

B I AMBITIONS

We're going to move in once I start work.
 After we move in, we're going to paint everything pink.

- (i) Gresh has made his plans:
 Once he gets the job of Prime Minister, he's going to get married. Then they're going to move into No. 10 Downing Street, paint everything pink, and then invite his in-laws to dinner.
 Explain his plans like this:
 get the job/get married *When he gets the job he's going to get married.*
- 1 get the job/Prime Minister *When.....*
 2. get married/move into a nice house *When.....*
 - 3 become Prime Minister/move into No. 10.....
 4. move in/paint everything pink.....
 - 5 settle in/invite his in-laws to dinner.....
- (ii) A journalist interviewing Gresh might question him like this:
Journalist: *Well Mr Gresham, what are you going to do when you get the job?*
Gresham: *I'm going to get married.*
 Now continue the interview, using the information given in (i) above.

- (iii) The journalist later discussed the interview with a colleague.

Their conversation began like this:

1st Journalist: *What's he going to do once he gets the job?*

2nd Journalist: *After he gets the job, he's going to get married.*

Now continue the conversation using the same information as above. Remember to use *once*, *when* or *after* in both your questions and answers.

C I INTENTIONS

How do you intend to keep a wife?
We're intending to get married next month.

- (i) Gresh and his wife have moved into No. 10. Mrs Gresham doesn't like everything she sees:

1. The front door isn't wide enough.
2. The bookshelves aren't high enough.
3. The curtains aren't long enough for her.
4. Most of the kitchen knives aren't sharp enough for her.
5. The mirrors aren't straight.
6. The pictures are too high up on the wall.
7. The telephone leads are too long.
8. The window catches are too tight.

She intends to change all this. What will she do?

Make sentences using one of the following words:

loosen widen lower raise shorten sharpen straighten lengthen

e.g. The curtains aren't long enough for her.

She intends to have them lengthened.

- (ii) Ask Gresh what his wife is going to do, and give his answers like this:

What's she going to do with the bookshelves?

She intends to get them raised.

- (iii) What does Mrs Gresham criticize in her new home, and what changes is she going to make?

Make sentences like this:

The wall-lights are crooked, so they're going to be straightened.

1. The shelves are too low, so.....
2. All the leads are much too long, so.....
3. Some of the screws on the mirrors are loose, so.....
4. Several of the knives are blunt, so.....
5. That centre-light is far too high, so.....
6. The front door is far too narrow, so...
7. The pictures are too high, so.....
8. The curtain rails are rusty, so.....(replace)
9. The staircase is unsafe, so.....(strengthen)
10. The windows are too small, so.....(enlarge)

D I WHAT'S THE PLAN?

Where are you planning to live?
We intend to move into a new house.

- (i) You see somebody buying some Swiss francs—*he's planning to go to Switzerland*.
What is being planned in the following situations?

1. She's getting a U.S. visa—*she's planning to*
2. He's looking at job advertisements—*he's*.....
3. She's got some holiday-brochures from the travel agency.....
4. He's talking to a car salesman.....
5. He's been looking at some wedding rings.....
6. He's just drawn £200 out of the bank.....

- (ii) Now ask and answer like this:

A: *Why did he buy some Swiss francs?*

B: *Because he was {planning
 {intending } to go to Switzerland.*

E I MORE PLANS

Are you planning to go into business?
I was going to be a millionaire:

- (i) A married couple are talking at the breakfast table:

Husband: *What are you planning to do today?*

Wife: *Well, I was going to make a dress/do some painting.
 I was thinking of making a cake/doing the ironing.*

Now ask the same question, and answer with the following:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. was going to/curtains | 5. had meant to/the housework |
| 2. had intended to/my sewing | 6. was thinking of/some gardening |
| 3. was thinking of/the washing | 7. had planned to/baking |
| 4. was supposed to/the gardening | 8. had hoped to/some bookshelves |

- (ii) Change of plans

Even Prime Ministers have to change their plans sometimes. Here is an extract from the Prime Minister's private diary.

Mon: Couldn't have tea with the Queen. Talks with union leaders.

Tues: Missed seeing myself on T.V. Diplomatic reception.

Wed: Didn't go to the Foreign Office cocktail party. Press conference.

Thurs: Unable to phone Kremlin. Cabinet meeting.

Fri: Wasn't able to write speech. Emergency discussion on the rail crisis.

Sat: Prevented from playing golf. Radio interview.

What had the Prime Minister intended to do this week?

Make six statements using the following:

had intended to had hoped to was going to had meant to had planned to
was supposed to

- (iii) Why did the Prime Minister have to change his plans?

He had to change his plan to have tea with the Queen because of talks with union leaders.

Make similar statements about his other changes of plan using *because of* or *on account of*.

- (iv) A newspaper reporter sums up this frustrating week in the Prime Minister's life:

On Monday he had to change his plans so that he could attend talks with union leaders.

On Tuesday.....

Complete the summary of the week's events

F I REASONS

I'm only taking the job in order to get the house.

We intend to get married next month so that we can move into our new house

A man should have a steady job, so as to be able to support a family.

- (i) 1. *I've come to London to see the Egyptian exhibition.*

Now give the reason why you've come to *see/attend/buy/find out about*:

Amsterdam/diamonds New York/skyscrapers Rome/traffic conditions
Paris/fashions London/antiques Madrid/bull fight

2. *I went to London to see the Egyptian exhibition.*

Now give the reason why you went to:

London Rome Moscow Paris New York Peking

Make statements using the following: *see; find out about; attend; buy.*

3. *I'm just going to pop in/call in/drop in next door to borrow some milk.*

Now give the reason why you are going to visit the following:

neighbour cleaners library bank-manager newsagent travel agent

- (ii) *She's learning French so that she can work in France.*

Why do you think she is learning the following? Use *studying, taking up, learning.*

Danish Arabic Norwegian Portuguese
Dutch Chinese Japanese Finnish

- (iii) We usually learn a language so as to be able to communicate with people from that country.

e.g. *He's studying Turkish so as/in order to be able to do business with Turks.*

Complete the following in the same way:

1. She's starting Danish lessons.....talk.....
2. He's learning Swiss-German.....understand.....fiancée.
3. They're both studying Hungarian.....teach.....
4. She's taking lessons in Swedish.....understand.....
5. He's taken up Dutch.....communicate.....customers.

- 6 He's doing a course in Arabic . travel in the Middle East and speak.....
7. She's teaching herself Finnish . hold conversations ..
8. They're doing Polish at an evening class . to do business.....
9. He's thinking of taking up Spanish . talk to . in their own language.
- 10 He's following a radio course in Portuguese . do business.....both.....and
.....

She's doing the following; give a reason why.

e.g. *She's sleeping now so as/in order to be wide awake tonight.*

saving up

buying an automatic dishwasher

learning to drive

trying to get a job with an airline

taking ski lessons

asking her boss for an afternoon off

learning shorthand and typing

buying a guide-book of London

B II

(i) Which career?

Schools often have a Careers Adviser, whose job it is to help school-children choose a career. These are the questions the Adviser might ask the student:

- a) What are you going to do when you leave school?
- b) How are you going to support yourself while you are studying?
- c) Who is going to keep you while you are at college?
- d) How much money do you think you are going to earn?

Select suitable answers to these questions from the following, using *intend to*, *mean to*, *going to*, in your answers.

- a) go into industry/banking/air force
go to university/technical college/art school
get married/see the world/become a teacher
- b) take part-time work . work in a factory , . sell encyclopedias
apply for a government grant
- c) ask my parents . win a scholarship . ask for a bank loan
- d) £5,000 a year by the age of thirty . £10,000

(ii) Aiming for promotion

Gresh didn't become Prime Minister and now works for a small firm, but he's ambitious and wants to get on. He's having an interview with the personnel manager, a Mr Jones, of a multiple chain-store.

Jones: Why do you want to come and work for us?

Gresh: Because I want a job with more scope than the one I've got at present.

Jones: In what way?

Gresh: Well – I understand that I'd have a chance here to be promoted to Sales Manager.

Jones: Is that your main reason for wanting to work here?

Gresh: Yes, because there are no prospects for promotion in my present job.

- 1 What is Gresh aiming to become?
- 2 Why does he want to move from his present firm? (... ..so as to.....)
3. Why is he hoping to join a bigger firm? (... ..so that.....chance.....)
- 4 Why should Gresh want a job with more scope? (... ..so that.....chance.....)
5. Why is he hoping to be promoted to Sales Manager? (... ..so as to.....)
- 6 Why should he want 'prospects for promotion'? (... ..so as to.chance.. ...)

7. Now continue the interview. The Sales Manager might ask Gresh:
- Do you think you'll enjoy working here?
 - Do you plan to make your career in Sales, or do you hope to change later on?
 - Are you ambitious?
 - What final position would you hope to achieve in this Company?

C II

- (i) *The Pupil Power movement intends to make the management and government of schools more democratic.*

What do you think the aims of the following campaigns are?

Clean-Air campaign

Noise Abatement

Homes before Roads campaign

Bring back School Discipline campaign

Stop Smoking campaign

Ban Fox-hunting campaign

Use the following words:

aiming

trying to

intending to

propose

hope

plans

- (ii) The aims of movements

What did the founders of the following movements and organizations

a) hope they would achieve?

c) intend them to do?

b) hope they were going to achieve?

d) mean them to do?

Give at least three aims of each:

1. The Olympic Games

4. The Boy Scouts

2. The United Nations

5. Alcoholics Anonymous

3. Women's Liberation

6. A Consumers' Association.

D II

- (i) Planning the impossible?

ICEBERGS ON TAP IN THE DESERT

CHILE is planning to tow icebergs from the Antarctic up to the tropics to provide fresh water for cities in the waterless Atacama desert.

The first city to benefit is expected to be Antofagasta, the mining port just south of the Tropic of Capricorn. Though the icebergs would lose half their volume on the journey north, they would still provide the freshest and softest water in the world at a fraction of the cost of water produced by any known method of desalination.

Icebergs have already been recorded as having drifted much

of the way to Antofagasta without any help. They move at a speed of about 1½ knots.

Once in position off Antofagasta, the ice masses could be covered with plastic sheets, but they would not need to be completely surrounded because the fresh water would float on top of the salt water and would not mix with it. The fresh water could then be drawn off and taken ashore.

At present, Antofagasta, a city of 75,000 people, exists with water brought by pipeline from the snow-covered Andes, but the supply is insufficient and at the mercy of climatic variations.

1. Read the passage again, and say what it is about, making at least three sentences about what the Chileans are planning to do with the icebergs.
 2. Now in three more sentences, say why they are making these plans.
- (ii) It is reported that teams from both Russia and America are working out details of how to link together two space-ships of quite different designs. Both sides are confident that they can reach their objective.
- To date, the two space 'giants' have been following different paths, with varying success. The American Apollo missions succeeded in putting men on the moon and returning them safely with samples of lunar rocks and materials. The Russians have preferred a mechanical, remote-controlled probe of the lunar surface. Now, however, the Americans have postponed any further lunar missions on account of the huge cost involved, and are concentrating on an earth-orbiting space laboratory, by means of which teams of astronauts can make observations of the surface of the earth and its surrounding atmosphere. It is in this venture that the Russians are hoping to participate, and promote international co-operation in space.
1. What are the Soviet Union and the U.S.A. planning to do?
 2. What were the plans of the Americans at the beginning of the Apollo space projects?
 3. What plans did the Russians make for lunar exploration?
 4. Why did the Americans postpone their plans to land more men on the moon?
 5. What plans have been made for Russian-American co-operation in space?
 6. What plans for space exploration do you consider will benefit mankind most?
 7. Discuss plans for future space exploration involving visits to other planets.

E II

- (i) What are you going to do for a living?

I	mean	to	become an architect	
	hope		take up go in for	architecture

Now make sentences in the same ways:

1. He/hope/a dentist *He hopes to take up dentistry.*
2. She/hope/a ballet dancer
3. He/mean/a chartered accountant
4. He/plan/a journalist
5. He/intend/a politician
6. They/hope/doctors
7. We/intend/actresses
8. I/thinking of/economist
9. He/thinking of/a teacher
10. He/thinking of/a hotel manager
11. They/intend/nurses
12. I/mean/astronomer

(ii) Failed ambitions

Gresh is discussing his career with his friend Bill, and confesses that he has not always been successful:

Gresh: *I had intended to become an architect.*

Bill: *So you'd hoped to take up architecture? Why didn't you?*

Gresh: *Because I failed my exams.*

Repeat this dialogue, using the careers mentioned in the last exercise, and finding in the lists below the reason why you didn't take up your planned career.

wasn't good enough at public speaking

the training was too long

wasn't clever enough

couldn't pass the exams

was too lazy to study

realised I had no talent for it

grew too tall

realised I wasn't cut out for it

couldn't afford the training

didn't have a head for figures

(iii) They didn't quite make it

The following are headlines taken from the daily newspapers. Join the sentences together to explain what went wrong in each case.

e.g. **MEAT PRICES SOAR—WORLD SHORTAGE**

Government unable to control rising price of meat.

The government failed to control the rising price of meat because of the world meat shortage.

1. **RIOTING IN CAPITAL—MAIN ROADS BLOCKED**

Government unable to control the disturbances. *The government failed to.....*

2. **BRITISH EXPEDITION ABANDONS ATTEMPT TO REACH SUMMIT OF EVEREST**

Bad weather forces climbers back. *British climbers failed to.....*

3. **CAR PRODUCTION FALLS SHORT OF ONE MILLION FORECAST**

Steel-workers' strike blamed. *Car production failed to reach.....*

4. **U.N. FAILS AGAIN—CIVIL WAR BREAKS OUT IN BURUNDI**

Last minute arguments in New York prevent the sending of peace force. *The U.N. failed to stop.....*

5. **STUDENTS DEMONSTRATE—RINGLEADER ARRESTED**

Boycott of lectures by students. *Students failed to attend.....*

6. **SMITH SPRAINS ANKLE IN MILE**

Record remains unbroken. *Smith failed to beat.....*

7. **TRADE UNIONS MAKE UNSUCCESSFUL ATTEMPT TO SAVE THE CANALS**

Government refuses to help. *The trade unions failed to.....*

8. **FOOD RIOTS IN COUNTRY AREAS—NEW GOVERNMENT FOOD SUPPLIES INSUFFICIENT**

The government failed to prevent.....

9. **WAGE NEGOTIATIONS BREAK DOWN—UNOFFICIAL STRIKE**

Management and workers failed to make any progress.....

F II

(i) Backseat driving

Whenever Grandma Groat is taken out in the car, she asks a lot of unnecessary questions.

Grandma: *Why did you brake so suddenly?*

Gresh: *So as to* { *avoid hitting that policeman.*
To }

How would Gresh answer the following? (Use the information below the questions.)

1. Why are you reversing?
2. Why did you drive so slowly through that town?
3. Why did you go the long way round?
4. Why on earth did you shake your fist at that man?
5. Why are you being so polite to that man?
6. Why are we stopping at this lay-by?
7. Why did you suddenly swerve like that?
8. What made you accelerate so fast?
9. Why did you cut in like that?

let him pass	have a look at that notice
warn him	avoid the traffic
have a rest	avoid hitting that child
overtake that lorry	overtake those slow cars
keep within the speed limit	

(ii) **Grandma:** *Why are you driving so slowly?*

Gresh: *So as not to splash the pedestrians.*

Now make similar questions and answers with the following:

Why?	So as not to
swerve	run down.....
brake	knock down.....
slow down	be caught for.....
change into bottom gear	get stuck on this.....
keep to the outside lane	be overtaken by.....
park so far from the entrance	block the.....

A III READING PASSAGE

Summerhill is a famous experimental boarding school that was founded in 1921. Here the founder, A. S. Neill talks about his aims:—

When my first wife and I began the school, we had one main idea: *to make the school fit the child*—instead of making the child fit the school.

I had taught in ordinary schools for many years. I knew the other way well. I knew it was all wrong. It was wrong because it was based on an adult conception of what a child should be and of how a child should learn. The other way dated from the days when psychology was still an unknown science.

Well, we set out to make a school in which we should allow children freedom to be themselves. In order to do this, we had to renounce all discipline, all direction, all suggestion, all moral training, all religious instruction. We have been called brave, but it did not require courage. All it required was what we had—a complete belief in the child as a good, not an evil, being. For over forty years, this belief in the goodness of the child has never wavered; it rather has become a final faith.

My view is that a child is innately wise and realistic. If left to himself without adult suggestion of any kind, he will develop as far as he is capable of developing. Logically, Summerhill is a place in which people who have the innate ability and wish to be scholars will be scholars; while those who are only fit to sweep the streets will sweep the streets. But we have not produced a street cleaner so far. Nor do I write this snobbishly, for I would rather see a school produce a happy street cleaner than a neurotic scholar.

1. Read the passage very carefully then say what it is about.
2. Do you agree that a school should aim to produce happy street cleaners rather than neurotic scholars?
3. Imagine that you are in charge of an experimental school which is based on your ideas about education. Describe some of the aims of the school.
4. The following was written by a seventeen-year-old girl; she is describing one aspect of the kind of school she would like:

"Give us a more varied syllabus! Give us the chance to visit factories, to talk with miners, dustbin-men, doctors, lawyers, prisoners and addicts too. Give us the chance to visit remand homes and prisons. We want to know more about life and a bit less about books."

Discuss what you think the aims of education should be.

B III

- (i) What do these people hope to achieve? (Use *try/aim/hope*.)

e.g. *A spy tries to find out the military secrets of the enemy. He tries to get this information without the enemy noticing.*

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. a spy | 6. a woman at the sales |
| 2. a kidnapper | 7. a blackmailer |
| 3. a student at a summer school | 8. a forger |
| 4. a hijacker | 9. a smuggler |
| 5. a gambler | 10. a swindler |

- (ii) Why did he do the following? (Use *in order to/so as to*.)

e.g. *Why did he dress up as a priest?*

In order to get across the border.

- | | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. fiddle the taxes | 3. forge the signature | 5. fake the photograph |
| 2. falsify the document | 4. cook the books | 6. cheat in the exam |

- (iii) Sports and games

What is the aim of these games and sports? How are they won or lost?

e.g. *Football is a game played between two teams. Each team aims to kick the ball into the other team's goal. Each team hopes to get more goals than the other. Make at least three similar sentences about three of these sports.*

(Use *try/aim/hope*.)

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|-------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. football | 6. rugby football |
| 2. table tennis | 7. canoeing |
| 3. boxing | 8. the Olympic pentathlon |
| 4. weight-lifting | 9. golf |
| 5. judo | 10. a slalom race |