

ENGLISH IN FOCUS

English in Social Studies

J. P. B. Allen · H. G. Widdowson

TEACHER'S EDITION

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Note on Self-study

This Teacher's Edition of *English in Social Studies* may also be used for self-study. When it is, the learner should take care to use the Key responsibly, as a check on the correctness of the work he has done and not as a short-cut to answers. He should also avoid referring to the Key as he is doing an exercise but should turn to it only after the whole exercise has been completed.

The teaching suggestions on pp. xx-xxiv are obviously not directly applicable to the learner using the book for self-study but they should give some idea of what kind of approach to take in using it.

Introduction

General aims

The aim of this book is to develop in students who are entering higher education an ability to handle the kind of written English that they will be concerned with as an integral part of their specialist subjects. The approach we have taken is one which recognizes that learning a language is not merely a matter of learning sentence patterns and vocabulary but must also involve an understanding of how people use these linguistic forms in order to communicate. Our purpose is to make students aware of the way English is used in written communication, and thereby to help them develop techniques of reading and to provide them with a guide for their own writing.

This book is based on the belief that intermediate and advanced students who are studying English as a necessary part of their specialist studies need a distinctive type of textbook: one which reflects the nature of the learning problems actually encountered at this stage, and which present the language as an aspect of the subject they are studying. We feel that a textbook directed at students at this level should attempt to do more than simply repeat the formulas in elementary language teaching material. Most courses of English concentrate on teaching the language system and fail to show how this system is used in communication. As a result, students may know about such formal items as affirmative sentences or modal verbs, but not know how these items are put to use in the making of different kinds of statement and in the production of continuous pieces of discourse.

The principal purpose of *English in Social Studies* is not to teach more grammar, but to show students how to use the grammar they already know. In writing this book we have made two basic assumptions. Firstly, we assume that the students have had a good deal of instruction in grammar and that they have a considerable dormant competence in English. The book is directed at activating this competence, and extending it, by leading the reader to relate his previously acquired linguistic knowledge to meaningful realizations of the language system in passages of immediate relevance to his specialist studies. Secondly, we assume that students either already have some knowledge of social science subjects or have the capacity to acquire such knowledge without difficulty. Our aim is not to teach the subject-matter of social science but to develop in the reader an understanding of how this subject-matter is expressed through English. In designing the

reading passages we have deliberately selected subject-matter which is easy to follow. In this way students can concentrate on the language being used without having to puzzle over unfamiliar or complex ideas at the same time. It should be emphasized that this book is not designed to teach either language in isolation or subject-matter in isolation but the manner in which both combine in meaningful communication. Our belief is that by relating content and expression in this way, the subject-matter takes on a new interest and the linguistic difficulties are reduced.

In order to ensure the natural communicative function of language we have graded by *focus* rather than by *exclusion*. Since we assume that the readers of this book already have a fairly wide knowledge of English grammar, and also have access to a standard dictionary and other reference books, we have been able to avoid an unnatural step-by-step presentation of grammatical patterns and vocabulary, and have instead tried to show how a fluent writer uses the whole resources of the language in performing various acts of communication. At the same time, we have taken care not to overload the student with new material and we have avoided complex structures except where they are necessary in maintaining a natural use of language. We believe that the book will prepare the student to cope with greater linguistic complexity by developing in him a reading strategy which he can bring to bear on the material in the textbooks he has to read.

In the exercises we have attempted to avoid mechanical drills and repetitive pattern practice. The users of this book will be people whose minds are directed towards rational thought and problem-solving and the exercises have been designed to take this fact into account: wherever possible, we have used exercises which require the same kind of mental activity as students of the social sciences would naturally be engaged in as part of their specialist studies. It is hoped that this kind of exercise will make the student see the relationship between expression and content, and will therefore persuade him of the relevance of English learning to his own speciality. In the last resort, we depend on the student being prepared to teach himself, to concentrate diligently on the features of language exemplified in the texts, and to approach the linguistic content of this book with the same spirit of enquiry and desire for knowledge as he would be expected to bring to his main area of study.

It is appreciated that, even in a course whose primary concern is with the written language, the teaching process must inevitably bring in the spoken form as well. Therefore, in order to assist both teacher and learner, the texts have been recorded on tape, as also have certain exercises containing additional vocabulary, the pronunciation of which might otherwise pose a problem.

Guide to the book

The book consists of eight units dealing with a range of topics within the

subject area of social studies. The first seven units are divided into four sections:

- I Reading and Comprehension
- II Use of Language
- III Guided Writing
- IV Reading and Note-taking

Unit 8 differs in having no separate Guided Writing section. All of the sections are concerned with developing a communicative competence in written English but each emphasizes a different aspect of this ability. Thus, Section I concentrates on reading comprehension and makes little demand on the learner's writing ability. Section II draws the learner's attention to specific communicative functions of English and requires him to realize these functions himself in written work, concentrating on the production of separate statements and paragraphs. Section III integrates and extends this written work by requiring the learner to bring different aspects of his competence to bear on the production of complete units of communication. In Section IV the emphasis is again on reading but here the learner's activity is relatively free and is less controlled by exercises concerned with points of detail. Having been prepared by the preceding sections, the learner is now expected to 'read for information' in the way which is normally required of him in his social studies.

I READING AND COMPREHENSION

This section begins with a reading passage within which are inserted sets of comprehension checks in the form of statements which may or may not be correct. The learner has to decide on the correctness of each statement. These checks are inserted within the reading passage itself rather than at the end because we want to encourage the learner to think about what he reads *as* he reads and to pay close attention to what is actually expressed in the passage. Once he realizes that his understanding is going to be systematically checked in this way, he is likely to read more attentively for meaning and to treat his reading not simply as a language exercise relevant only to the English class but as a technique for acquiring information which will be useful in a wider field of study.

The comprehension checks require the learner to indicate whether a given statement is true or false according to the passage. But it is important that he should know why a statement is true or false and be able to recognize what it is in the passage that leads him to decide one way or the other. This is why each comprehension check is provided with a solution.

The learner participates in the completion of each solution. In the first four units he is guided in his task by references to those parts of the passage where the missing expressions are to be found. In the second half of the book these references are omitted and the student has to find the relevant parts of

the passage for himself. The solutions, then, can be thought of as explanations which the learner partially discovers for himself; they direct his attention to what he must notice and how he must reason to arrive at the correct decision as to the truth or falsity of the statement in the comprehension check. Explanations of this kind are of course not necessary for someone who already has an efficient reading ability in English. At first glance it might appear that the solutions are sometimes too elaborate and detailed. But it must be remembered that learners have to be made aware of what is involved in reading with understanding before this ability can become habitual. What we aim to do by means of the solutions is to develop in the learner a reading strategy which he can bring to bear in Section IV and which he can apply generally to his reading in social studies.

Let us consider an example from Unit 3. Comprehension check (a) presents the following statement: '*Socialization refers to the way an individual acquires appropriate social behaviour.*' The student has to decide whether this statement is true or not according to the reading passage. In order to make this decision it is necessary to relate what is expressed in three different sentences. This relating process is represented in the solution as follows. (The words in italics are provided by the student, with reference to the sentences in the reading passage indicated by the numbers. The symbols on the left indicate the kind of reasoning that is involved; = equals, i.e. that is to say.)

As a child grows up, he learns the *patterns of behaviour* (2) which are accepted as normal in his society.

= The child learns behaviour which is *appropriate* (1) to his society.

i.e. The child learns appropriate *social* (3) behaviour.

i.e. The individual *acquires* (2) appropriate social behaviour.

The way an individual acquires appropriate social behaviour is referred to as *socialization* (3).

= *Socialization refers to the way an individual acquires appropriate social behaviour.* (The statement in comprehension check (a) is true according to the reading passage.)

What solutions of this kind do is to spell out certain reasoning processes which are employed by the efficient reader as a matter of habit. Their use here as a language exercise is intended to reflect the patterns of logical thought which are characteristic of social studies, and to help students to see that the 'content' and the 'expression' of a written text are two aspects of the same act of communication.

The comprehension checks and solutions, then, are intended to develop attentive reading for detail, and in particular to draw the learner's attention to how information expressed in one sentence is related to information expressed in others in the same text. However, we know that not all the information expressed in a reading passage will be of equal significance; a

statement may be true but relatively trivial in the context of a particular passage. Following the solutions, therefore, we have a number of exercises which are designed to promote the student's ability to discriminate between the different parts of a text and to make his own decision about their relative importance.

EXERCISE A *Meaning assessment*

The aim of this exercise is to get learners not only to distinguish between true and false statements but also to assess the relative importance or significance of different true statements with regard to a particular passage. The ability to distinguish a main idea from a subsidiary one, which this exercise is intended to promote, is, of course, an important aspect of reading comprehension. It is also the concern of Exercise C. In Units 5–8 meaning assessment is combined with summary writing. In these exercises, the student has to separate a number of true statements from others which are false, and combine the true statements into a short passage which forms the answer to a question referring to part of the reading passage.

EXERCISE B *Contextual reference*

This exercise draws the learner's attention to the way pronouns, demonstratives and certain expressions of general reference (like *such a social group* and *a contract of this kind* in Unit 1) are used to refer to something already mentioned and so serve to relate one statement to another. Very often there is more than one grammatically possible connection between noun phrases and the reader has to decide which reference makes sense in the context of the passage concerned.

As an example, let us take the first two sentences of the reading passage in Unit 1, italicizing one of the pronouns for convenience:

Most social anthropologists recognize the family as a basic social unit.

In its most elementary form *it* may be defined as a group consisting of a man and a woman and their children living together in one home.

Grammatically speaking, 'it' in the second sentence could refer either to 'the family' or 'a basic social unit'. However, we bring more to the interpretation of a text than a knowledge of formal grammar, and in this case we know that only one reference makes sense in terms of the passage. In the exercise the student is asked to refer to the context and replace the expressions in italics with others which make the meaning clear. Thus, he would rewrite the second sentence as follows:

In its most elementary form *the family* may be defined as a group consisting of a man and a woman and their children living together in one home.

More difficult examples are to be found in the second half of the book. In the reading passage of Unit 8, for example, the following sentence occurs:

This must be done in such a way as to allow the efficient distribution of traffic while preserving a satisfactory standard of environment.

What must be done? In order to make this reference clear, the demonstrative has to be replaced by a complex expression which sums up the whole of the preceding argument. Thus the sentence is rewritten:

The redesigning of the physical arrangement of streets and buildings which we have inherited from the past must be done in such a way as to allow the efficient distribution of traffic while preserving a satisfactory standard of environment.

This exercise, then, obliges the learner to scrutinize the passage to assign the correct referential 'value' to such 'anaphoric' language items as pronouns, demonstratives and so on. This exercise is not difficult, and it may sometimes seem obvious what a given item refers to. But again it must be remembered that we are not just concerned with getting the learner to recognize the contextual reference of a particular language item in a particular passage but with developing a general ability to handle this feature of language use. The point is that this exercise directs the learner's attention to the way anaphoric devices work and so prepares him for those cases where identification of the referent is not so easy.

EXERCISE C (Units 1-4) *Summary*

In the first four units of the book this is a separate exercise. In Units 1-3 the learner is presented with a set of statements in random order and is required to integrate them with the final statements from the solutions to create a coherent paragraph which will serve as a summary of the reading passage. In Unit 4, the learner is required to make a selection of appropriate statements first before arranging them in the right order.

As we have mentioned above (Exercise A), in the last four units of the book the summary exercise is combined with the meaning assessment exercise. The assumption is that as the learner proceeds through the book his communicative ability will develop so that in the later stages he can handle summary writing in a more integrated way without the need to single out certain aspects of the task for special emphasis. In the second half of the book the summary exercise is replaced by:

EXERCISE C (Units 5-8) *Relationships between statements*

Expressions like *therefore*, *consequently*, *however*, etc. which indicate what function a particular sentence is meant to fulfil, are known as logical connectors. A sentence which contains *therefore* is used to make a statement

which follows logically from a previous statement. Similarly, *for example* indicates that the sentence is used to make a statement which illustrates a point made previously. Such expressions are explicit indicators of the communicative function of sentences. But writers do not use explicit indicators in every sentence. Very often a writer assumes that the reader will realize how a particular sentence is to be understood without the assistance of such devices. It is of course crucial for the student learning to read a foreign language to understand which statements are meant to be illustrations, qualifications, conclusions and so on, and how statements are logically related to each other. The exercises in Sections I and II in the first half of the book will have made the learner aware of some of these relationships and will have provided him with practice in expressing them in writing. In Units 5-8, Exercise C is intended to consolidate and extend this awareness. It takes the form of a number of sentences which can be combined to form a paragraph by using the logical connectors which are listed at the beginning. Often there is scope for the student to use his own judgement in deciding how the paragraph should be written. In Unit 5 Exercise C the following two sentences occur:

Man's needs are socially conditioned and vary from country to country.
A child in Northern Europe may consume twenty times as much as a child born in India.

A fluent reader will see at once that the function of the second sentence is to provide an example to support the generalization expressed in the first sentence. In this case, the student may decide to leave the sentences as they stand, or he may decide to make the relationship more explicit by adding 'for example' at the beginning of the second sentence.

II USE OF LANGUAGE

This section consists of a set of exercises which are intended to develop the learner's communicative competence in English through writing, not only as an end in itself, but, perhaps more importantly, as a way of directing the learner's attention to the way language is used, and so of developing his capacity for comprehension.

In the first four units, these exercises focus on a number of rhetorical acts which commonly occur in the literature of social science: definitions, descriptions, qualifications, contrastive and corrective statements. These acts are not only dealt with separately, but exercises are also provided which draw the learner's attention, by active involvement, to the way these acts combine to form larger units of communication, leading up to the last exercise in this section, called 'Discourse development'.

This section in the last four units of the book is also concerned with certain rhetorical functions but here there is a shift of emphasis to the communicative properties of certain points of grammar which seem to be

of common occurrence in social science texts. Whereas in the first part of the book we focus attention on the rhetorical act itself and practise grammar as a necessary consequence, in the second part of the book the primary focus of attention is on points of grammar and the exercises are intended to indicate their rhetorical function. In both parts of the book this section is concerned with 'functional grammar', with the way the language system is put to communicative use. In the last four units there is no exercise called discourse development but instead the last exercise in the section is devoted to paragraph writing, and this requires the learner to put into practice the ability to work with larger units of communication which the discourse development exercises are intended to promote. In this paragraph writing activity, extensive use is made of a procedure we call *information transfer*. This involves the use of written English to express information and ideas presented in the form of diagrams. Students concerned with social science subjects are familiar with the use of non-verbal means of communication like graphs, tables, diagrams and so on and are required, as part of their normal studies, to convert information from a verbal to a non-verbal mode and the reverse. This type of exercise, therefore, is intended to link the students' language learning with their main area of study and to involve them in normal and meaningful language behaviour.

III GUIDED WRITING

The exercises in this section follow on naturally from the preceding exercises and aim to bring about a synthesis of the different activities which have been dealt with in the earlier part of the unit. In this section the learner is guided towards the writing of a complete paragraph from a set of language elements. In the first four units, these elements are sentences which the learner is required first to complete, in the traditional way, and then to combine in a coherent sequence. In the last four units, the starting point is a set of phrases which represent notes from which the paragraph is subsequently built up. In the normal process of writing we do not usually begin by composing correct sentences in random order, whereas we often begin by making a set of notes. In this respect, the guided writing section in the first four units is more like a language learning exercise, whereas that in the last four units aims at approximating to normal communicative behaviour. Once again, the aim in the second part of the book is to exploit what has been learned in the first.

In Unit 8 there is no separate guided writing section. Instead, the paragraph writing based on diagrams in Section II is extended. First the student does a series of controlled exercises which lead him to write a detailed account of a particular town planning proposal. Then, using his earlier work as a guide, he is asked to present his own proposal based on an imaginary town, or on an actual town with which he is familiar. This final writing exercise requires the student to assemble his own data and to handle

a quantity of complex material, using his own words as far as possible. Thus, during the course of the book, the student progresses from simple, closely controlled composition to a type of exercise which, though still controlled, takes on many of the characteristics of free essay writing.

IV READING AND NOTE-TAKING

In Section I of each unit, reading is represented as a carefully controlled activity and the learner is directed to a close scrutiny of the passage. The aim is to develop intensive reading. In Section IV we shift the focus to extensive reading. The learner is primed beforehand by a number of questions whose purpose is to direct his attention to certain points of the passage. He is then asked to read a second time and complete a set of notes which summarize the content.

One reason for including the reading and note-taking section is to give the student an opportunity to learn for himself. The previous sections impose a fairly strict control over the student's activities. In Section IV, apart from answering the questions provided, he is able to try out what he has learned in his own way and in his own time. It is assumed that the student's interest in the way language is used in a social science context will have been sufficiently aroused for him to be ready to develop his own study techniques without further help in the form of detailed exercises. The reading and note-taking section provides additional opportunities for word study and gives the student a chance to try his skill in locating further examples of the points he has studied in the unit. It is hoped that the final section of each unit will provide a bridge to more extensive reading beyond the confines of this book, and that the student will be encouraged to consult his standard social science texts as a further source of information about the way language is used.

When the students have written their summaries of the passage, the teacher may wish to round off the work of the unit with a class discussion drawing upon the students' own experience. Teachers should have no difficulty in thinking up suitable points for discussion. The topics given in the text are provided simply as examples.

To summarize, we can describe the basic structure of the book in the following way. Each unit is divided into sections which focus on different aspects of communicative competence in written English but at the same time represent them as interrelated elements of one complex ability. Our aim has been to write a book which both encourages and allows for the gradual development of this competence as the learner moves from section to section within each unit and from unit to unit within the book as a whole. In the first part of the book (Units 1-4) the emphasis is on providing the learner with practice in basic language skills. In the second part of the book (Units 5-8) the learner's activities approximate more and more closely to

the kind of normal language behaviour that will be required of him in pursuing his further studies, using English as a reference language, or as the medium of instruction. The last unit ends with an exercise which presents the learner with an unedited extract from a government report. The aim of the book is to provide a sequence of exercises which will gradually develop the learner's ability to the point at which he will be able to cope with communication at this level.

Teaching suggestions

The following notes indicate how Units 1 and 5 might be dealt with in the classroom. The other units can be handled in a similar way. These notes are intended to be suggestions only. It is expected that the teacher will develop his own procedures according to the needs of his students. A particular teacher, for example, may find that he needs to place greater emphasis on one type of exercise than on another. He may wish to pay more attention to oral than to written work, or the reverse. It will also be up to the teacher to decide, according to his own circumstances, how the work is to be divided into class sessions, and which part of it can most appropriately be done as homework.

I READING AND COMPREHENSION

(i) Reading the text (Unit 1)

Get the class to read sentences 1–6 by themselves.

Take the class through the explanation and do questions (a) and (b) with them so that it is clear what they have to do.

Take the class through solutions (a) and (b), getting individuals to provide the missing words, and showing how the solutions function as a check for the comprehension questions.

Read sentences 1–6 aloud to the class, while they follow in their books.

Get the class to read sentences 7–14 and to do questions (c) and (d) on their own.

Choose one student. Ask him whether he has written 'true' or 'not true' against question (c). Get him to justify his decision with reference to the appropriate parts of the text. Ask other students whether they agree, and if not why not.

Get the class to turn to the relevant solution, and get individuals to provide the missing words with reference to the text. Read the solution aloud to the class while they follow in their books.

Choose another student, and do the same with question (d).

Read sentences 7–14 aloud to the class, while they follow in their books.

Get the class to read sentences 15–20 by themselves.

Get the class to do questions (e) and (f) on their own, and repeat the process as for questions (a), (b), (c) and (d).

Read the whole passage aloud to the class, without the questions, while the students follow in their books.

(ii) Exercises

EXERCISE A (Unit 1) *Meaning assessment*

Read out the three statements relating to paragraph 1, with the students following in their books.

Get the students to re-read paragraph 1, and to decide which of the statements are true or false according to the passage.

Choose one student. Ask him to say which of the statements are true and which are false, and get him to justify his decision with reference to the text. Ask other students whether they agree, and if not why not.

Get the students to read paragraph 1 again, and to decide which of the true statements expresses the most central idea.

Choose a student, and ask him to state the most central idea. Ask the other students whether they agree, and if not why not.

Repeat the process for paragraphs 2, 3 and 4.

Get the students to write the four statements in their notebooks.

EXERCISE A (Unit 5) *Meaning assessment and summary writing*

Select a student and ask him whether statement (a) is true or false.

Get him to justify his decision with reference to the passage. Ask the other students whether they agree.

Proceed in the same way with statements (b)–(h).

Get the students to write the summary in their notebooks.

Select a student and get him to read out his summary.

Ask the other students whether they agree that the summary is satisfactory.

Make any modifications that seem to be necessary. Write the final version on the board, emphasizing the function of the logical connectors.

EXERCISE B (Units 1 and 5) *Contextual reference*

Get the class to do the exercise in their notebooks.

Select individuals to say what phrase they have chosen to replace the underlined item, and to read out the sentence which results.

Ask the students to judge how they would write the sentences in the exercise

(a) if the sentence were to begin a new paragraph in a different piece of writing
(b) if the sentence were to be retained in its original position in the text.

Get the students to discuss what changes might be made in the passage. The aim should be to make the meaning clear, while at the same time taking care not to introduce too much repetition.

EXERCISE C (Unit 1) *Summary*

Get the class to do the exercise in their notebooks.

Select a student and get him to read out his summary.

Ask the other students whether they agree that the statements are in the right order. If there is a difference of opinion, write both versions on the board. Get the class to refer to the reading passage and to decide which is the most satisfactory summary.

EXERCISE C (Unit 5) *Relationship between statements*

Get the class to do the exercise in their notebooks.

Choose one student. Get him to read out the paragraph, including the logical connectors.

Ask the class to judge whether the logical connectors have been inserted in the appropriate positions. Consider alternative versions if necessary.

Ask the students to consider whether there are any logical connectors which might be omitted without obscuring the meaning.

II USE OF LANGUAGE (Unit 1)

EXERCISE D *Definitions*

Do one or two examples orally.

Tell the students to write the remaining definitions in their notebooks.

EXERCISE E *Generalizations and qualifications*

Get the students to study the explanation carefully.

First do the sentences orally, then get the students to write the sentences in their notebooks. While they are doing this, go round the class and give individual help where necessary.

EXERCISE F *Information transfer – definitions and descriptions*

Get the students to study the first diagram and the definition and description below it.

With the help of the class, draw a diagram on the board to correspond to the second definition and description.