

FOURTH EDITION (第四版)

GRAMMAR *in* CONTEXT

英语语境语法

1A



SANDRA N. ELBAUM



北京大学出版社
PEKING UNIVERSITY PRESS

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著作权合同登记 图字: 01-2006-0572

图书在版编目(CIP)数据

英语语境语法. 1A / 桑德拉编著. —北京: 北京大学出版社, 2006.1

ISBN 7-301-10310-7

I. 英… II. 桑… III. 英语-语法 IV. H314

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(2005)第 145678 号

SANDRA N. ELBAUM

Grammar in Context 1A, Fourth Edition

EISBN: 1-4130-0737-6

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981-265-827-0

Thomson Learning (A division of Thomson Asia Pte Ltd)

5 Shenton Way, # 01-01 UIC Building Singapore 068808

书 名: 英语语境语法 1A (第四版)

著作责任者: SANDRA N. ELBAUM 编著

责任编辑: 胡娜 张冰

标准书号: ISBN 7-301-10310-7/H·1603

出版发行: 北京大学出版社

地 址: 北京市海淀区成府路 205 号 100871

网 址: <http://cbs.pku.edu.cn>

电 话: 邮购部 62752015 发行部 62750672 编辑部 62767347

电子邮箱: zbing@pup.pku.edu.cn

排 版 者: 华伦图文制作中心

印 刷 者: 北京大学印刷厂

经 销 者: 新华书店

889 毫米×1194 毫米 16 开本 17 印张 488 千字

2006 年 1 月第 1 版 2006 年 1 月第 1 次印刷

定 价: 32.00 元(配有光盘)

导 言

北京大学英语系教授 王逢鑫

语言由语音、词汇和语法三个要素组成。学习一门外语,必须掌握这三个要素,缺一不可。有人认为只要记住单词,能读出音来,就行了,而语法可有可无。其实这是一种误解。语法是组词造句的法则,十分重要。传统英语语法细分为词法(morphology)和句法(syntax)。词法解释词分为哪些种类,即词类;告诉人们每个词类有什么特点,即词性;说明一个词与别的什么词可以联系在一起使用,即在句子里起什么作用。英语词汇形态与汉语有很大的区别。例如,名词有单、复数之分,还有可数与不可数之分。人称代词有主格、宾格和所有格之分。动词有现在式、过去式和过去分词三种不同形式;还有不定式、现在分词、过去分词和动名词等非谓语动词形式。形容词有原级、比较级和最高级三种形式。数词有基数词和序数词之分。以上词类大都是规则变化,但是也有很多不规则变化的例外情况。例如英语有一百来个不规则动词,其中多数是常用动词。介词后面跟人称代词要用宾格,跟动词要用动名词形式。英语的冠词更是难学。有人学了多年英语,还是弄不清楚什么时候用定冠词,什么时候用不定冠词,什么时候不用任何冠词。虽然不定冠词仅有 a 和 an 两种形式,但是有人把 an hour 写成 a hour,把 a university 写成 an university。这些繁杂的内容都是初学者必须掌握的,使用不当就要犯错误。

英语句法分析句子的种类、结构和功能。英语句法比汉语复杂。英语有各种各样的时态,每种时态有自己固定的形式,不能用错。句法规则繁多,几乎没有什么道理可讲。例如,在一般现在时里,单数第三人称的动词要加-s。情态动词和助动词后面要跟原形动词。英语句子讲究人称和时态前后呼应,左右照顾。诸如此类的条条框框都是初学者的“拦路虎”。

国内外的语言学家和英语教师,曾经尝试使用各种各样的方法来教英语语法。时代不同,学习目的不同,教学对象不同,教材不同,学习方法不同,使得人们很难找到学习英语语法的一个最佳方案。但是,我们了解一下国内外英语语法教学的来龙去脉,或许有助于我们吸取教训,总结经验,寻找有效的学习英语语法的途径。

传统法(traditional method)强调以语法为纲,以语法为教学中心。学生按部就班学习语法规则,先是死记硬背条条框框,然后做大量的机械性(mechanical)练习,基本上是没有上下文的单句翻译、语法填空和造句练习。追求的是语法形式正确无误,而不管在什么情况下使用语言。学习语法,不是为了交际,而是为了阅读内容艰深的文章,分析复杂的句法结构。我国解放前和解放初期的英语专业大学生,是通过传统法学习英语语法的,虽然有一些弊端,例如引导学生重视阅读和笔译,而忽视口头表达能力的培养。但是这种方法也并非一无是处。学生中不乏精通英语的成功者。传统法强调阅读小说、诗歌、戏剧和散文等文学作品,认为文学语言是最好的语言。通过对语句和篇章细致的句法分析,学生获得对语句和篇章

结构,尤其是繁杂结构的精确理解。今天我们强调学习语言是为了交流思想,重视口头表达能力,传统法是难当此任的。

听说法(audio-visual method)将英语分成许多基本句型(sentence pattern),将语法教学与句型教学结合在一起。要求学生熟练掌握句型,反复口头练习,达到不假思索,脱口而出的程度。掌握了句型,就等于掌握了语法。20世纪60年代初,听说法引入我国,在当时的英语专业大学生中间曾经奏效。学生反复练习没有上下文的基本句型,虽然枯燥无味,但是在当时的历史环境下,多数学生能够不厌其烦地做大量的机械性口头练习,而取得较好的学习效果。现在的学生要求在学习过程中有更多的独立自主,对死记硬背基本句型不太感兴趣。利用听说法学习英语语法似乎不太合平时宜了。

语言学家和英语教师总是想方设法改进语法教学。他们先是将以单句练习为主的机械性句型练习,扩充为共有两句话的二人对话,构成一个简单的情景,使所练习的句型变得有意义。再往后,进一步将二人对话扩大为围绕一个主题的、有上下文的情景会话(situational conversation)。这样,学生可以在一定的语境(context)之中通过句型学习英语语法。最初的语境是为了练习某个语言点,或为了掌握某种意念功能而编造的,具有人为的成分。20世纪80年代初,国内外兴起交际法(communicative method)。这种教学法的目标是让学生不仅学会听、说、读、写的语言能力(linguistic competence),还要掌握交际能力(communicative competence)。交际法从交流的目的出发,既要求语法正确(correct in grammar),更要求语用得体的(appropriate in use)。因而在教学中引进了社会与文化因素。学习内容不再是干巴巴的基本句型,而是人们关注的社会问题和文化现象。学生不再为学习语法而学习语法,而是为了交际来学习语法。他们希望能够使用语法正确、语用得体的语言,就人们关注的社会问题和文化现象进行交流。这样就需要在一定的社会环境和文化语境里学习语言,包括学习语法。在学习语言的同时,必须了解英语国家的文化背景,以及中外文化差异。只有学习了相关的文化背景知识,才能更好地掌握语言。这套名为Grammar in Context(《英语语境语法》)的教材,在上述背景下应运而生。

二

这套《英语语境语法》的编者 Sandra N. Elbaum 女士,是美国的一位英语教师,专门教授从世界各地到美国的移民,他们是以英语为第二语言的学生。Elbaum 女士幼年随父母由波兰移民到美国,语言差异和文化差异经常使她的父母感到困惑。Elbaum 女士在移民聚居的社区中成长,深知一个外国移民在美国生存,不仅要逾越语言障碍,更要克服文化差异。她有一个信念,就是通过语境学习语法。她不但在教学中身体力行,通过语境教英语语法,而且亲自编写教材,体现这一理念。

这套英语教材名曰《英语语境语法》,实际上是教给学生通过语境学习英语语言。这套教材的宗旨是:让学习者在语境中学习语法,以便学到更多东西,记住更多东西,更加有效地运用语言。

这套教材有如下突出特点:

1. 教给学生进行口头交流和书面交流所必需的语法知识。按照循序渐进原则安排语法点,讲解后面的语法内容都联系和复习前面的语法内容,使整个语法系统构成一个有机的整体。解释每个语法点,都使用形象的语法图表(grammar chart),一目了然。每个语法图表提供有语境的精选例句,并给出清晰的解释,还配以语言提示(language note),增强学习者对所学语法结构的理解。每个语法点还以图表方式解释其形式、用途、语序、主语、相关结构、描述与定义、所需介词搭配、肯定句、

否定句和疑问句及回答等项目。每个项目都配有大量的口头和笔头练习。

2. 不是为教语法而教语法,而是通过语法教学,给学习者提供有用的(usable)、有意义的(meaningful)技能和基本文化知识。在课堂上,教师不是局限于让学生做机械性练习,而是让他们通过二人对话、小组活动、游戏、讨论等多种形式的扩展活动(expansion activity),互相启发,互相帮助,学以致用。通过阅读、作文、独立思考的练习等方式,学习者拓展自己的语言知识和交际能力,最终达到既能有效使用语言,又有信心正确使用语言进行交流的双重目的。
3. 教材将英语语法学习和美国文化语境结合起来。全套教材分为1、2、3三级,每级又分为两个分册,共有1A、1B、2A、2B、3A、3B等6个分册。1级和2级各有14课;3级有10课。每课内容,包括语法讲解和练习、阅读课文和扩展活动,都围绕美国社会的一个热门话题,构成一个语境。从语言学习角度,涉及一个语法点;从文化学习角度,涉及一个话题。二者巧妙结合。1级有学校生活、美国政府、美国节日、美国人及其住宅、家庭与姓名、美国人生活方式、婚礼、飞行、购物、营养与健康、伟大女性、美国地理、约会与婚姻、实习等14个话题。2级有宠物、老年生活、改善生活、婚礼、感恩节与印第安人、健康、移民、租房、上网搜索、找工作、交友、体育、法律、货币等14个话题。3级有工作、好莱坞、灾难与悲剧、消费者警告、肯尼迪家族、计算机与互联网、帮助他人、来到美国、关爱儿童、科学与科幻小说等10个话题。这些语境概括了美国社会的方方面面,是了解美国文化和在美国生存所必需的基本知识。这些语境有助于学习者掌握必需的文化背景知识,使他们懂得美国文化在语言、信仰和日常生活情景等方面的重要作用。

这是一套通过语境学习英语的好教材。使用这套教材,学习者不仅可以熟练掌握英语语法,运用英语语言;而且可以学习美国文化背景知识,在语境中学习英语,在语境中使用英语。希望学习者喜欢这套教材,并通过学习这套教材学好英语。

Contents

Lesson 1 1

GRAMMAR	The Present Tense of the Verb <i>Be</i> ; Prepositions of Place; <i>This, That, These, Those</i>	
CONTEXT	College Life	
READING	Community College Life in the U.S.	2
	1.1 Forms of <i>Be</i>	3
	1.2 Uses of <i>Be</i>	4
	1.3 Word Order with <i>Be</i>	5
	1.4 The Subject	6
READING	Letter from College	7
	1.5 Contractions with <i>Be</i>	8
	1.6 <i>Be</i> with Descriptions	10
	1.7 <i>Be</i> with Definitions	11
	1.8 Prepositions	14
	1.9 Negative Statements with <i>Be</i>	15
READING	Instant Message from a Student in the U.S.	19
	1.10 <i>Be</i> in <i>Yes/No</i> Questions and Short Answers	20
	1.11 <i>Wh</i> - Questions with <i>Be</i> ; Question Words	22
	1.12 Comparing Statements and Questions with <i>Be</i>	25
	1.13 Questions with <i>What</i> and <i>How</i>	26
READING	In the School Cafeteria	29
	1.14 <i>This, That, These, Those</i>	30
	Summary of Lesson 1	31
	Editing Advice	32
	Lesson 1 Test/Review	34
	Expansion Activities	38

Lesson 2 41

GRAMMAR	The Simple Present Tense	
CONTEXT	The U.S. Government	
READING	Washington, D.C.	42

	2.1 Simple Present Tense—Forms	43
	2.2 Simple Present Tense—Uses	44
	2.3 Spelling of the -s Form	45
	2.4 Pronunciation of the -s Form	46
	2.5 Comparing Affirmative Statements— Be and Other Verbs	48
	2.6 Negative Statements with the Simple Present Tense	49
	2.7 Comparing Negative Statements with Be and Other Verbs	51
READING	The IRS	53
	2.8 Yes/No Questions and Short Answers with the Present Tense	54
	2.9 Comparing Yes/No Questions— Be and Other Verbs	58
	2.10 Or Questions	59
	2.11 Wh- Questions with the Simple Present Tense	61
	2.12 Comparing Statements and Questions in the Simple Present Tense	62
	2.13 Questions About Meaning, Spelling, and Cost	64
	2.14 Comparing Wh- Questions— Be and Other Verbs	65
	Summary of Lesson 2	67
	Editing Advice	68
	Lesson 2 Test/Review	70
	Expansion Activities	75

Lesson 3 77

GRAMMAR	Frequency Words with the Simple Present Tense; Prepositions of Time	
CONTEXT	American Holidays	
READING	Three Special Days	78
	3.1 Frequency Words with the Simple Present Tense	79
	3.2 Position of Frequency Words and Expressions	81
READING	The Fourth of July	83
	3.3 Prepositions of Time	84
	3.4 Questions with Ever	85
	3.5 Questions with How Often and Answers with Frequency Expressions	88
	Summary of Lesson 3	92
	Editing Advice	93
	Lesson 3 Test/Review	93
	Expansion Activities	97

Lesson 4 101

GRAMMAR	Singular and Plural; Articles and Quantity Words; There + Be + Noun
---------	---

CONTEXT	Americans and Where They Live	
	4.1 Singular and Plural—An Overview	102
READING	Americans and Where They Live	102
	4.2 Regular Noun Plurals	104
	4.3 Pronunciation of Plural Nouns	105
	4.4 Irregular Noun Plurals	106
READING	Finding an Apartment	108
	4.5 Using <i>There</i> + <i>Is/Are</i>	110
	4.6 Questions and Short Answers Using <i>There</i>	112
	4.7 <i>There</i> vs. <i>They</i> and Other Pronouns	115
READING	Calling About an Apartment	117
	4.8 Articles with Definite and Indefinite Nouns	118
	4.9 Making Generalizations	120
	Summary of Lesson 4	123
	Editing Advice	124
	Lesson 4 Test/Review	125
	Expansion Activities	128

Lesson 5 131

GRAMMAR	Possession; Object Pronouns; Questions About the Subject	
CONTEXT	Families and Names	
READING	Names	132
	5.1 Possessive Form of Nouns	133
	5.2 Possessive Adjectives	135
	5.3 Questions with <i>Whose</i>	136
	5.4 Possessive Pronouns	137
	5.5 The Subject and the Object	138
READING	William Madison's Name	139
	5.6 Object Pronouns	140
READING	Who Helps Your Parents?	145
	5.7 Questions About the Subject or About the Complement	146
	5.8 <i>Who, Whom, Who's, Whose</i>	147
	Summary of Lesson 5	149
	Editing Advice	150
	Lesson 5 Test/Review	151
	Expansion Activities	155

Lesson 6 159

GRAMMAR	The Present Continuous Tense	
---------	------------------------------	--

CONTEXT	Observations About American Life	
READING	Observations in the Park	160
	6.1 The Present Continuous Tense	161
	6.2 Spelling of the <i>-ing</i> Form	162
	6.3 The Present Continuous Tense—Uses	163
	6.4 Questions with the Present Continuous Tense	165
READING	Observations in the School Cafeteria	169
	6.5 Contrast of Present Continuous and Simple Present	170
	6.6 Nonaction Verbs	172
	6.7 <i>Think, Have</i> , and the Sense Perception Verbs	174
	Summary of Lesson 6	181
	Editing Advice	182
	Lesson 6 Test/Review	183
	Expansion Activities	187

Lesson 7 189

GRAMMAR	Future Tenses— <i>Will</i> and <i>Be Going To</i> ; Comparison of Tenses	
CONTEXT	Weddings	
READING	Planning for a Wedding	190
	7.1 Future with <i>Will</i>	191
	7.2 Future with <i>Be Going To</i>	192
	7.3 Choosing <i>Will</i> or <i>Be Going To</i>	193
	7.4 Questions with <i>Be Going To</i>	198
	7.5 Questions with <i>Will</i>	199
	7.6 Future Tense + Time/ <i>If</i> Clause	203
READING	Jason and Katie—Starting a Married Life	209
	7.7 Comparison of Tenses	210
	Summary of Lesson 7	214
	Editing Advice	214
	Lesson 7 Test/Review	215
	Test on Comparison of Tenses	218
	Expansion Activities	221

Lesson 8 223

GRAMMAR	The Simple Past Tense	
CONTEXT	Flying	
READING	The Wright Brothers—Men with a Vision	224
	8.1 The Simple Past Tense of Regular Verbs	225
	8.2 Spelling of the Past Tense of Regular Verbs	226
	8.3 Pronunciation of <i>-ed</i> Past Forms	227

READING	Charles Lindbergh and Amelia Earhart	229
	8.4 Past Tense of <i>Be</i>	230
	8.5 Uses of <i>Be</i>	231
	8.6 Questions with <i>Was/Were</i>	232
	8.7 Simple Past Tense of Irregular Verbs—An Overview	237
READING	Robert Goddard	237
	8.8 List of Irregular Past Tense Verbs	239
	8.9 Negative Forms of Past Tense Verbs	241
	8.10 Questions with Past Tense Verbs	245
	8.11 Questions About the Subject	251
	Summary of Lesson 8	254
	Editing Advice	255
	Lesson 8 Test/Review	256
	Expansion Activities	260

Lesson 9 263

GRAMMAR	Infinitives; Modals; Imperatives	
CONTEXT	Smart Shopping	
	9.1 Infinitives—An Overview	264
READING	Getting the Best Price	264
	9.2 Verbs Followed by an Infinitive	265
	9.3 <i>It + Be + Adjective + Infinitive</i>	268
	9.4 <i>Be + Adjective + Infinitive</i>	269
	9.5 Using an Infinitive to Show Purpose	270
READING	Getting a Customer's Attention	272
	9.6 Object Before an Infinitive	273
	9.7 Overview of Modals	276
READING	Smart Shopping: Coupons, Rain Checks, and Rebates	277
	9.8 <i>Can</i>	278
	9.9 <i>Should</i>	280
	9.10 <i>Must</i>	283
	9.11 <i>Have To</i>	285
	9.12 <i>Must</i> and <i>Have To</i>	287
	9.13 <i>Might/May</i> and <i>Will</i>	288
	9.14 Making Requests	290
READING	The Customer Service Counter	290
	9.15 Imperatives	292
	9.16 Using Modals to Make Requests and Ask Permission	295
	Summary of Lesson 9	297
	Editing Advice	298
	Lesson 9 Test/Review	299

Lesson 10 307

GRAMMAR	Count and Noncount Nouns; Quantity Words	
CONTEXT	Nutrition and Health	
	10.1 Count and Noncount Nouns—An Overview	308
READING	A Healthy Diet	308
	10.2 Noncount Nouns	310
	10.3 Count and Noncount Nouns	312
	10.4 Describing Quantities of Count and Noncount Nouns	313
	10.5 <i>A Lot Of, Much, Many</i>	314
	10.6 <i>A Few, A Little</i>	315
	10.7 <i>Some, Any, and A/An</i>	316
READING	Eat Less, Live Longer	320
	10.8 <i>A Lot Of</i> vs. <i>Too Much/Too Many</i>	321
	10.9 <i>Too Much/Too Many</i> vs. <i>Too</i>	323
	Summary of Lesson 10	326
	Editing Advice	326
	Lesson 10 Test/Review	328
	Expansion Activities	330

Lesson 11 333

GRAMMAR	Adjectives; Noun Modifiers; Adverbs	
CONTEXT	Great Women	
READING	Helen Keller	334
	11.1 Adjectives and Adverbs	335
	11.2 Adjectives	336
	11.3 Noun Modifiers	338
	11.4 Comparing Adverbs of Manner and Adjectives	340
	11.5 Spelling of <i>-ly</i> Adverbs	341
READING	Grandma Moses	345
	11.6 <i>Too</i> vs. <i>Very</i>	345
	11.7 <i>Too</i> and <i>Enough</i>	346
	Summary of Lesson 11	349
	Editing Advice	349
	Lesson 11 Test/Review	351
	Expansion Activities	353

Lesson 12 355

GRAMMAR	Comparatives; Superlatives	
---------	----------------------------	--

CONTEXT	U.S. Geography	
READING	U.S. Geography	356
	12.1 Comparatives and Superlatives—An Overview	357
	12.2 Comparative and Superlative Forms of Adjectives and Adverbs	358
	12.3 Superlative Adjectives	360
	12.4 Word Order with Superlatives	362
READING	A Tale of Two Cities	363
	12.5 Comparisons	365
	12.6 Word Order with Comparisons	367
	Summary of Lesson 12	371
	Editing Advice	371
	Lesson 12 Test/Review	372
	Expansion Activities	374

Lesson 13 377

GRAMMAR	Auxiliary Verbs with <i>Too</i> and <i>Either</i> ; Auxiliary Verbs in Tag Questions	
CONTEXT	Dating and Marriage	
READING	Dating and Marriage	378
	13.1 Auxiliary Verbs with <i>Too</i> and <i>Either</i>	380
	13.2 Auxiliary Verbs with Opposite Statements	381
	13.3 Tag Questions	384
READING	Saturday with Meg and Don	384
	13.4 Auxiliary Verbs in Tag Questions	386
	13.5 Answering a Tag Question	390
	Summary of Lesson 13	394
	Editing Advice	395
	Lesson 13 Test/Review	396
	Expansion Activities	398

Lesson 14 401

GRAMMAR	Verb Review	
CONTEXT	Washington Interns	
READING	Washington Interns	402
	14.1 Verb Tenses	404
	14.2 Statements and Questions	408
	Editing Advice	414
	Lesson 14 Test/Review	416
	Expansion Activities	420

Appendices

A.	The Verb <i>Get</i>	AP1
B.	<i>Make</i> and <i>Do</i>	AP3
C.	Question Formation	AP4
D.	Alphabetical List of Irregular Past Forms	AP6
E.	Meanings of Modals and Related Words	AP7
F.	Capitalization Rules	AP8
G.	Metric Conversion Chart	AP9
H.	Prepositions of Time	AP11
I.	Glossary of Grammatical Terms	AP12
J.	Verbs and Adjectives Followed by a Preposition	AP17
K.	Map	
	The United States of America: Major Cities	AP18
	Index	I1
	Photo Credits	C1

LESSON

1

GRAMMAR

The Present Tense of the Verb *Be*

Prepositions of Place

This, That, These, Those

CONTEXT: College Life

Community College Life in the U.S.

Letter from College

Instant Message from a Student in the U.S.

In the School Cafeteria



COMMUNITY COLLEGE LIFE IN THE U.S.

Before You
Read

Circle *T* for True or *F* for False and discuss your answers.

1. Most of the students in my class are immigrants. T F
2. My school is in a convenient¹ location. T F



Read the following article. Pay special attention to *is*, *am*, *are*.

A community college (or two-year college) **is** a good place to begin your education in the U.S. The tuition **is** usually cheaper than at a university. Because a community college **is** often smaller than a university, foreign students **are** often more comfortable. They **are** closer to their professors and get more attention.

Truman College **is** a typical community college. It **is** one of seven City Colleges of Chicago. It **is** a two-year college on the north side of Chicago. It **is** near public transportation—buses and trains—so it **is** convenient for everyone. For students with a car, parking **is** free. Credit classes **are** \$70 per credit hour. Adult education classes **are** free.

Truman College **is** an international school. Many of the students **are** from other countries and **are** in ESL courses. Some of the students **are** immigrants. Some of the students **are** international students. International students **are** in the U.S. only to study. Tuition for international students **is** much higher.

Many of the students have jobs, so evening and weekend classes **are** convenient for these students. Some students have small children, so Truman has a child-care center.

The semester **is** 16 weeks long. Summer semester **is** eight weeks long. Students **are** free to choose their own classes.

¹Something that is *convenient* is easy for you. A convenient location is near your house or near public transportation. Convenient classes are at a time that is good for you.



Read the following student composition. Pay special attention to *is, am, are*.

My name **is** Rolando Lopez. I **am** from Guatemala. I **am** a student at Truman College. My major **is** engineering. I **am** married, and I work during the day. My classes **are** at night and on Saturdays. The college **is** a good place for me to start my education in the U.S. because the tuition **is** low and the attention to students **is** very high. My plan **is** to take 60 credit hours here and then go to a four-year college, such as the University of Illinois. I like it here because the teachers **are** friendly and helpful and the students from other countries **are** interesting.

1.1 Forms of *Be*

Examples			Explanation
Subject	Form of <i>Be</i>	Complement	
I	am	a college student.	Use <i>am</i> with <i>I</i> .
My teacher	is	an American.	Use <i>is</i> with <i>he, she, it</i> , and singular subjects (<i>teacher, wife, college</i>).
He		friendly.	
Truman		a City College.	
It		in Chicago.	
My wife		a student.	
She		busy.	
We	are	students.	Use <i>are</i> with <i>we, you, they</i> , and plural subjects.
You		the teacher.	
The students		from all over the world.	
They		immigrants.	

EXERCISE 1 Fill in the blanks with *is, are, or am*.

EXAMPLE My name is Rolando Lopez.

- I _____ from Guatemala.
- My wife _____ from Mexico.
- My wife and I _____ students.
- The University of Illinois _____ a four-year college.
- My classmates _____ from many different countries.
- We _____ immigrants.
- The professors at my college _____ friendly and helpful.
- My major _____ engineering.
- The semester _____ 16 weeks long.