

NEW CONCEPT ENGLISH

Practice and Progress

L. G. ALEXANDER



新概念英语

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NEW CONCEPT ENGLISH

PRACTICE AND PROGRESS

An Integrated Course For Pre-Intermediate Students

L. G. ALEXANDER

Illustrations by Michael folkes, Graham and Gus

新概念英语

〔英汉对照本〕

第 2 册

修 订 版

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[英汉对照本]

第2册修订本

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[英汉对照本] 修订版说明

本书出版后，受到广大自学者和许多院校的欢迎，同时也有不少来信指出不足之处，提出很多好建议。我们本着尽力为读者服务的初衷，逐册进行修订再版。

一、修订版将在原开本条件下，尽量放大外文字，特别是第1册将恢复原版书字体大小。并全部采用胶印，以保持字迹清晰；采用串线装订，以便利展开阅读。

二、各册严格按出现顺序排列和增补生词和短语，第1册还添加了字母表和国际音标表，以真正符合初学的需要。对第1、2、3册原版书中某些单元开始时指导学生如何做练习的说明 (INTRODUCTIONS TO THE STUDENT) 加注了译文。此项译文的繁简完全从当时学生阅读能力出发，开始从详，以后渐略。

三、第2册练习中的Key Structure (KS) 和Special Difficulties (SD) 的内容，在同书以后练习中复习时，常以括号注明其所在页码。对照本印制中保留了它们所在原版的页码，而在第2册书后附载对照表，以便读者找到其在对照本的页码。

第3册练习中复习以前的KS或SD时，出现两种页码：凡(I KS)、(I SD) 是指第2册上的页码，要查第2册的对照表；(KS) 或 (SD) 是指第3册上的页码，要查第3册书后的对照表。

四、适应读者要求，我社将为广大自学者出版《新概念英语辅导材料》1~4册，收载各课的详细注释、有关词汇研究、同义词近义词辨析以及练习的参考答案。

五、原版第3、4册开端的About this Course中均曾提到Cambridge Lower Certificate Examination和Cambridge Proficiency Examination，并说明本教材与第一证书英语考试和熟练英语考试应具水平的关系。这两种考试是由英国剑桥大学每年在全世界举行的一种英语永准正规测试，凡合格者发给证书，被世界许多国家所承认。为了帮助母语非英语的学生适应这种测试的要求，英国Edward Arnold出版社早已出版《第一证书英语教程》(First Certificate of English Course) 和《熟练英语证书教程》(A New Certificate of Proficiency English Course)。应读者要求我社正根据它们的最新修订版，编辑其英汉对照本，争取早日出版，以便给英语爱好者提供又一种优良读本，可以与《新概念英语》参照学习。

六、[英汉对照本]的修订版，由郭兴家、王福林、韦振雄三位老师负责。

Cover photo: *THE STATUE OF LIBERTY*, on Liberty Island in
New York Harbor, greets travelers on arriving vessels.

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To the Teacher

Language Learning at the Pre-Intermediate Level

General Principles

Traditional methods of learning a foreign language die hard. As long ago as 1921, Dr Harold Palmer pointed out the important difference between understanding how a language works and learning how to use it. Since that time, a great many effective techniques have been developed to enable students to learn a foreign language. In the light of intensive modern research, no one would seriously question the basic principles that have evolved since Palmer's day, though there is considerable disagreement about how these principles can best be implemented. Despite the great progress that has been made, teachers in many parts of the world still cling to old-fashioned methods and to some extent perpetuate the systems by which they themselves learnt a foreign language. It may, therefore, not be out of place to restate some basic principles and to discuss briefly how they can best be put into effect in the classroom.

Learning a language is not a matter of acquiring a set of rules and building up a large vocabulary. The teacher's efforts should not be directed at informing his students about a language, but at enabling them to use it. A student's mastery of a language is ultimately measured by how well he can use it, not by how much he knows about it. In this respect, learning a language has much in common with learning a musical instrument. The drills and exercises a student does have one end in sight: to enable him to become a skilled performer. A student who has learnt a lot of grammar but who cannot *use* a language is in the position of a pianist who has learnt a lot about harmony but cannot play the piano. The student's command of a language will therefore be judged not by how much he knows, but how well he can perform in public.

In order to become a skilled performer, the student must become proficient at using the units of a language. And the unit of a language is not, as was once commonly supposed, the word, but the sentence. Learning words irrespective of their function can be a waste of time, for not all words are equal. We must draw a distinction between *structural* words and *lexical* items. Words like *I, you, he* etc. are *structural*. Their use can be closely defined; they are part of a grammatical system. Words like *tree, plant, flower* etc. are purely *lexical* items and in no way part of a grammatical system. From the learner's point of view, skill in handling structural words is the key to mastering a language, for the meaning that is conveyed in sentence-patterns depends largely on the function of the structural words that hold them together.

It is possible, though this has yet to be proved scientifically, that every student of a foreign language has what might be called a 'language ceiling', a point beyond which he cannot improve very much. If we accept this supposition, our aim must be to enable every student to learn as much as he is capable of learning in the most efficient way. The old-fashioned translation and grammar-rule methods are extremely wasteful and inefficient, for the student is actually encouraged to make mistakes: he is asked to perform skills before he is adequately prepared. Teachers who use such methods unwittingly create the very problems they seek to avoid. At some point in the course their students inevitably become incapable of going *on*: they have to go *back*. They have become remedial students and the teacher is faced with the problem of remedying what has been incorrectly learnt. No approach could be more ineffective, wasteful and inefficient.

The student should be trained to learn by making as few mistakes as possible. He should never be required to do anything which is beyond his capacity. A well-designed course is one which takes into account what might be called the student's 'state of readiness': the point where he can proceed from easy to difficult. If the student is to make the most of his abilities, he must be trained to adopt correct learning habits.

What has to be Learnt?

The student must be trained adequately in all four basic language skills: *understanding, speaking, reading and writing*. In many classroom courses the emphasis is wholly on the written language. The student is trained to use his eyes instead of his ears and his inability to achieve anything like correct pronunciation, stress and intonation must be attributed largely to the tyranny of the printed word. If the teacher is to train his students in all four skills, he must make efficient use of the time at his disposal. Efficiency presupposes the adoption of classroom procedures which will yield the best results in the quickest possible time. The following order of presentation must be taken as axiomatic:

Nothing should be spoken before it has been heard.

Nothing should be read before it has been spoken.

Nothing should be written before it has been read.

Speaking and writing are the most important of these skills, since to some extent they presuppose the other two.

Learning to Speak

The traditional 'conversation lesson' is of no value at all if the student is not ready for it. It is impossible for any student at the post-elementary level to take part in discussions on topics like 'The Cinema Today', for his ideas quite outstrip his capacity for expressing them. The student must first be trained to use patterns in carefully graded aural/oral drills. Only in this way will he finally learn to speak.

Before considering how this can be done, it should be noted that the patterns in a language fall into two distinct categories: *progressive* and *static*. For instance, learning how to answer and to ask questions involves the use of *progressive* patterns. They are *progressive* because the student's skill in handling these complex forms must be developed over a long period, beginning with a simple response like 'Yes, it is' and culminating in complex responses like 'Yes, I should, shouldn't I'. A *static* pattern, on the other hand, like the comparison of adjectives can be taught in a limited number of lessons, not over a long period.

Progressive patterns should be practised through comprehension exercises which require the student to answer and to ask questions which become increasingly complex as the course proceeds. The student should be trained to give tag answers; make negative and affirmative statements to answer double questions joined by *or*; answer general questions which begin with question-words like *When, Where, How* etc.; and at each stage, the student should be trained to ask questions himself. It is obvious that these skills cannot be dealt with in one or two lessons: the student requires practice of this kind in *every* lesson.

At the same time, static patterns should be practised by means of drills which make use of language-laboratory techniques. In each of these drills, the teacher seeks to elicit a particular kind of response. He provides the student with a stimulus to elicit the new pattern in a series of oral drills until the student is able to respond accurately and automatically.

Students may also be trained to speak through oral composition exercises where they are required to reproduce orally a passage of English they are familiar with. At the outset, the student should practise reproducing narrative and descriptive pieces. At a much later stage, he will practise reproducing the substance of an argument. When he can do this well, he will be in a position to converse on set topics which deal with abstract ideas. By this time he will be able to express himself with confidence and will make relatively few mistakes.

The techniques used in speech training at the pre-intermediate level may be summarized as follows:

- Drilling in progressive patterns.
- Drilling in static patterns.
- Practice in oral composition.

Learning to Write

The same sort of careful grading is required when we attempt to teach students to write. We must again begin with the simplest form of statement. Students are all too often plunged into composition work long before they are ready for it. At some point in a course, the teacher may decide that it is time his students attempted to write a composition, so he sets a short narrative or descriptive piece and hopes for the best. This is a random, hit-or-miss method which creates enormous remedial problems and produces disastrous results. If a student's sole experience of written English has been to fill in blank spaces in

tailor-made sentences, it is wildly unreasonable to spring a composition subject on him and then expect him to produce correct and readable prose. As with premature discussions on set topics, all we are doing is to encourage him to make mistakes. And it is no good hoping that after a few years of this (involving massive correction on the part of the teacher) the student will somehow improve on his own. Very few students are sufficiently conscientious or highly motivated to examine in detail their own corrected written work. Even if they did, there is absolutely no guarantee that they will not go on making the same mistakes. Writing skill can best be developed through carefully controlled and graded comprehension/précis exercises. Précis writing is not a sterile academic exercise useful only for examination purposes. It can be used effectively to develop a student's writing ability. At the pre-intermediate stage, the student must learn how to write simple, compound, and complex sentences and to connect ideas from notes. Controlled précis writing will enable the student to master each of these difficulties and bring him to a point where he will be capable of writing a composition with a minimum of error.

The main stages in training the student in the written language at the pre-intermediate level may be summarized as follows:

Practice in writing simple sentences through controlled comprehension/précis exercises.

Practice in writing compound sentences through controlled comprehension/précis exercises.

Practice in writing complex sentences through controlled comprehension/précis exercises.

Practice in connecting ideas from notes that have been provided.

The Teaching of Grammar

In traditional textbooks, all information about sentence patterns is presented in the form of 'rules' which the student applies in a series of disconnected sentences by filling in blank spaces, or by giving the correct form of words in brackets. It has become abundantly clear that this approach to language-learning is highly ineffective. It encourages the teacher to talk *about* the language, instead of training his students to use it. The emphasis is on written exercises. The greatest weakness in this approach is that the student cannot transfer what he has learnt from abstract exercises of this kind to other language skills like understanding, speaking and creative writing.

A new pattern should not be presented as the exemplification of some abstract grammar-rule, but as a *way of saying something*. No further explanation or elucidation is necessary. The student is trained to use correct forms automatically, rather than by applying 'grammar logic'. Where explanation is necessary, it can be done by relating a new pattern to one that has already been learnt. If, for instance, the student has learnt the use of 'must', he can be taught the use of 'have to' by being made to see a meaningful relationship between the two.

Students working at the pre-intermediate level may be given exercises in recall, that is, relating language difficulties to a particular context they know well. In this way they will be trained to use correct forms instinctively. The teacher is, incidentally, saved the trouble of correcting exercises, since, for the most part, the passages do this for him.

Traditional filling-in-the-blank exercises still have a place in a modern course, but with one important difference: they should not be used as a means of teaching new patterns, but as a means of consolidating what has been learnt. They are an end, not a means to an end. In this respect, they are extremely useful in tests and can be employed for diagnostic purposes or to enable the teacher to assess terminal behaviour.

The Multi-Purpose Text

In order to do all the exercises outlined above, the student must work from specially-written texts. Each text must be used to train the student in the following skills:

Aural comprehension.

Oral practice (*progressive* and *static* patterns).

Reading aloud.

Oral composition.

Dictation.

Controlled comprehension, *précis* and composition practice (simple, compound and complex sentences).

Written grammar exercises in recall.

We might call these specially-written passages *multi-purpose texts*, since they are used as the basis for a variety of exercises which aim at developing a number of skills simultaneously.

If these texts are to be suitable for so many purposes, they must be specially devised. The new patterns that are to be taught must be *contextualized*, that is, they must be built into each text. These reiterated patterns should be unobtrusive: their use should strike the listener as being inevitable rather than artificially superimposed. There is also another very important requirement: the texts must be interesting or amusing so that they will entertain the student, hold his attention, and minimize the inevitable drudgery involved in drill work. If the texts are accompanied by illustrations, they will be even more appealing. At the beginner's level, illustrations are more functional than decorative. At this level, the reverse is true: the pre-intermediate stage marks a transition from audio-visual techniques to audio-lingual ones.

Speed and Intensity

Traditional courses are often divided into 'lessons', but these 'lessons' do not take into account what can be done in an average teaching period of forty-five minutes or an hour. They simply consist of 'an amount of information' and

may run on for a great many pages. In the classroom, one of these 'lessons' might drag on for weeks because so much has to be done.

A lesson must be precisely what the word implies: an amount of material that can reasonably be covered in a teaching period, possibly with additional material which can be done as homework. In other words, a lesson must be considered as a unit of instruction and no more. Now it is extremely difficult for the course designer to decide what can be done in an average period. Obviously a class of bright students will cover more ground than a class of less able ones. This problem can be overcome if the lesson contains material which can be omitted at the discretion of the teacher, providing that these omissions do not hamper the students' progress.

Levels

For purely practical purposes, students attending language schools have to be classified in terms of knowledge and achievement. It might be worth noting that a full-scale course would resolve itself into three parts, each of which would consist of two stages:

Stage 1 : Pre-elementary level.
Elementary level.

Stage 2 : Pre-intermediate level.
Intermediate level.

Stage 3 : Pre-advanced level.
Advanced level.

About this Course

From Theory to Practice: Basic Aims

This course attempts to put into practice all the theories about language learning outlined above. Briefly, the aims may be stated as follows:

1. To provide a comprehensive course for post-elementary adult or secondary students. The course contains sufficient material for about one and a half academic years' work. It is assumed that the student will receive about four hours' instruction each week i.e. four one-hour lessons on four separate occasions, or two 'double periods' each consisting of two hours or ninety minutes. If we take the academic year to consist of thirty-six weeks, there will be sufficient material in this course for fifty-four weeks' work. The student will receive most of his training in the classroom and will be required to do a little extra work in his own time.

2. To train the student in all four skills: *understanding, speaking, reading, and writing*—in that order. In this respect, the course sets out to do two things: to provide material which will be suitable for aural/oral practice and which can at the same time be used to train the student systematically to write English.

3. To provide the student with a book which will enable him to *use* the language.

4. To provide the teacher with well-co-ordinated and graded material which will enable him to conduct each lesson with a minimum of preparation. As many of the exercises are 'self-correcting', the teacher will, incidentally, be relieved of the arduous task of correcting a great many written exercises.

5. To enable the teacher and the student to work entirely from a single volume without the need for additional 'practice books'.

6. To prepare the ground for students who might, at some future date, wish to sit for academic examinations like the Cambridge Lower Certificate. This aim must be regarded as coincidental to the main purpose of training students in the four language skills.

7. To provide the teacher with recorded material which can be used in the classroom and language-laboratory. It must be emphasized, however, that this is in no way a full-scale language-laboratory course. It is essentially a classroom course, designed primarily for teachers who have no access to a language laboratory. The recorded drills are only intended for teachers who make use of a language-laboratory at regular or irregular intervals to supplement work done in the classroom.