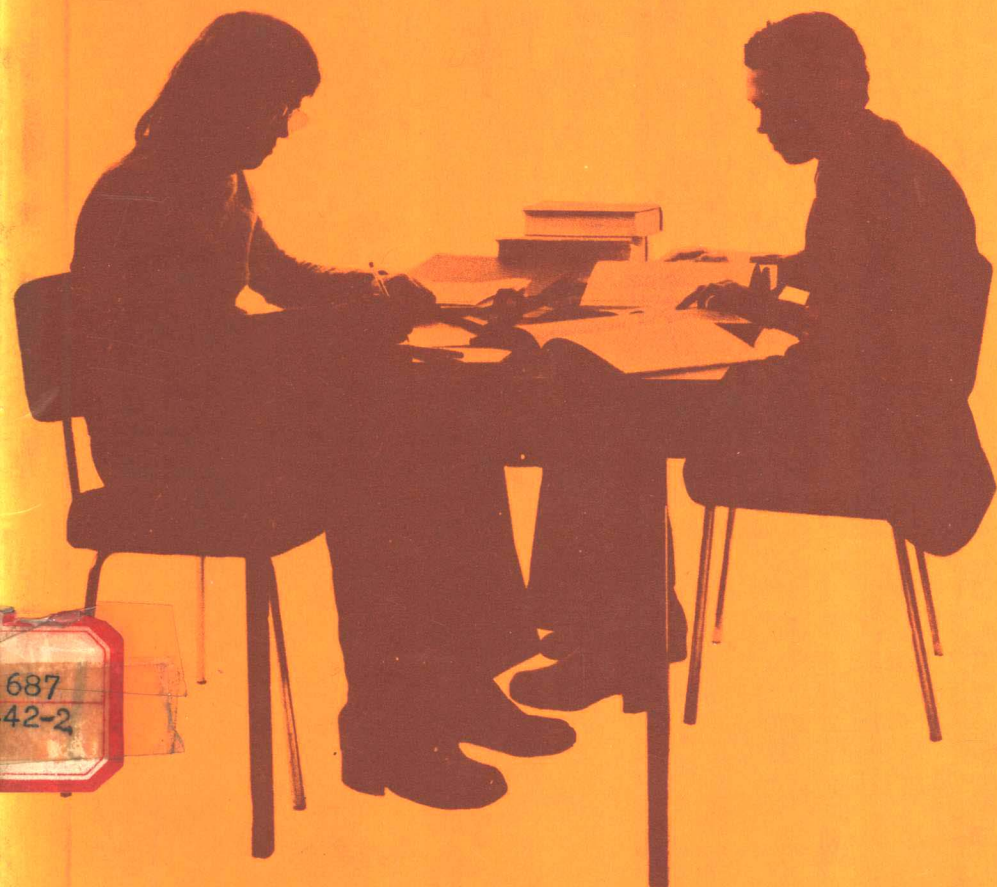


# Studying in English

A practical approach to study skills  
in English as a second language

J B Heaton



# Studying in English

A practical approach to study  
skills in English as a second  
language

**J B Heaton**

**Longman Group Limited**  
**London**

*Associated companies, branches and representatives throughout the world*

© Longman Group Ltd 1975

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior permission of the Copyright owner.

First published 1975  
New impression 1978  
ISBN 0 582 55205 2

Filmset by Keypools Limited, Golborne, Lancashire  
*Printed in Hong Kong by*  
*Sing Cheong Printing Co Ltd*

# Foreword

Students whose mother tongue is not English meet many new problems when they start studying at universities and colleges where English is the medium of instruction. Some of them find that the variety of English they have learned is literary and old-fashioned. Some of them have read very little English about the subjects they are studying. Few of them are expert silent readers, and the skills they have are often appropriate only for the reading of simple fiction and not suited to the study of textbooks and journals written in scholarly English. They have all learned to write compositions but not to compose reports and articles. They may never have been taught how to make notes from books or lectures or even how to listen efficiently to talks and lectures. These are only a few of the tasks which are essential for studying in universities and colleges but to which many students have given little time while they were at school.

It is hoped, therefore, that this book will prove useful not only for the first-year student at college or university but also for the sixth-form student who intends to continue with his studies in the medium of English. An increasing number of books now being published will assist the student to master the particular varieties of English he will require. This book is intended to develop the language skills he will need.

The practice material is arranged in units and may be used in class by the teacher or on a self-instruction basis. Each unit contains two or three hours' work, concentrating on developing the listening, note-taking, and reading skills. Listening comprehension and note-taking are practised in every unit, while practice in reading alternates with practice in listening to lectures. Writing practice is also included in each unit, the 'model' notes for each lecture and reading text providing a basis for writing. Both teacher and student will find that the note-taking practice given in the book provides a useful means of teaching writing.

This book functions in two ways simultaneously: it provides useful information and practical hints on how to study in the medium of English and at the same time practises wherever possible the techniques advocated. For example, in one unit the student hears a short lecture concerning ways of improving his reading ability while

in the next unit he reads a text about listening to lectures. Exercises on each of the skills described are also given in the Practice section of each unit. All the major study skills, therefore, are reinforced through constant practice. Since the contents of each talk, lecture and reading text concentrate solely on study techniques, a degree of cohesion of subject matter is attained, making it possible for the material to be used with students of the sciences as well as students of the arts. It is hoped, therefore, that students of all disciplines will find the book equally interesting and useful.

A tape has been produced to accompany the book. However, many lecturers and teachers will undoubtedly wish to use the book without feeling dependent on a tape-recorder. Consequently, the scripts of all the talks and lectures are included in the Appendix and may be either read aloud to the class or treated as a reading text. The tape-recording, however, is advantageous for students who are working on their own and who otherwise will miss the listening practice.

## Acknowledgements

I wish to express my sincere thanks to Mr A K Pugh for his advice and encouragement during the writing of this book and during our frequent discussions on learning techniques, particularly on the development of the reading skills. Indeed, many of the terms used in the sections on reading have been adopted from the conceptual framework outlined by Mr Pugh in 'The development of silent reading' in *The Road to Effective Reading*, ed. D W Latham. Ward Lock, London, 1974.

I also wish to express my gratitude to Mr John Bright for his extremely useful comments and constructive suggestions on earlier drafts.

JBH

We are grateful to the following for permission to reproduce copyright material: The Clarendon Press for the definition of the word 'study' from *The Concise Oxford Dictionary* 5th edition 1965; Longman Group Ltd for the definition of the word 'study' from the *New Method Dictionary* and for an extract from *Overseas Students' Companion to English Studies* by J B Heaton and J P Stocks: G & C Merriam Company for the definition of the word 'study' from *Webster's Third New International Dictionary*. © 1971 by G & C Merriam Co., Publishers of the Merriam Webster Dictionaries: Oxford University Press for the definition of the word 'study' from *Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*. © Oxford University Press 1971 and from *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*. © Oxford University Press 1974: Penguin Books Ltd for an extract from *What's The Use of Lectures?* by Donald Bligh. © Donald A Bligh, 1972 and Scott, Foresman & Company for an excerpt from the introduction to *Thorndike-Barnhart Comprehensive Desk Dictionary* by Clarence L Barnhart. © 1962 by Scott, Foresman and Company. Reprinted by permission of Scott, Foresman and Company.

# Contents

Foreword viii

Acknowledgments x

## Unit One

### Study problems and objectives

A Listening comprehension: *Study problems* 1

B Note-taking: *Word omissions* 1

C Reading: *Study objectives* 4

D Practice section 10

## Unit Two

### Organising your study

A Listening comprehension: *Concentration and study habits* 12

B Note-taking: *Abbreviations and numbers* 13

C Lecture: *Planning a timetable* 14

D Practice section 15

## Unit Three

### Note-taking

A Listening comprehension: *General principles of note-taking* 18

B Note-taking: *Salient points* 19

C Reading: *Skills involved in note-taking* 19

D Practice section 26

## Unit Four

### Improving your reading

A Listening comprehension: *Increasing reading speed* 29

B Note-taking: *Synonyms, word compression and omission of examples* 30

C Lecture: *Increasing reading comprehension* 31

D Practice section 35

## Unit Five

### Lectures

A Listening comprehension: *Listening to lectures* 37

B Note-taking: *Signalling devices (1)* 38

C Reading: *What can the lecture achieve?* 39

D Practice section 43

## Unit Six

### Using a dictionary

A Listening comprehension: *What kind of dictionary?* 46

B Note-taking: *Signalling devices (2)* 46

C Lecture: *What a dictionary contains* 47

D Practice section 54

## Unit Seven

### Reading textbooks

A Listening comprehension: *Skimming* 56

B Note-taking: *Relationships (1)* 57

C Reading: *The SQ3R method* 58

D Practice section 61

## Unit Eight

### Learning in small groups: Tutorials and seminars

A Listening comprehension: *Improving your speaking ability* 63

B Note-taking: *Relationships (2)* 64

C Lecture: *Tutorials and seminars* 65

D Practice section 66

## Unit Nine

### Writing reports and articles

A Listening comprehension: *Judgement skills in writing* 68

B Note-taking: *Relationships (3)* 69

C Reading: *Report writing* 70

D Practice section 75

## **Unit Ten**

### **Learning and remembering**

- A Listening comprehension: *Memory* 78
- B Note-taking: *Relationships (4)* 79
- C Lecture: *Methods of improving learning procedures* 79
- D Practice section 80

## **Unit Eleven**

### **Examinations**

- A Listening comprehension: *Preparing for the examination* 82
- B Note-taking: *Lectures and books* 82
- C Reading: *Examination and test techniques* 83
- D Practice section 90

## **Unit Twelve**

### **Reference and research techniques**

- A Listening comprehension: *Reference techniques* 95
- B Note-taking: *Sequence of ideas* 96
- C Lecture: *Research techniques* 97
- D Practice section 98

## **Bibliography 99**

# Appendix: Talks and lectures (Scripts)

## Unit One Study problems and objectives

A Listening Comprehension: *Study problems* 103

## Unit Two Organising your study

A Listening comprehension: *Concentration and study habits* 105

C Lecture: *Planning a timetable* 106

## Unit Three Note-taking

A Listening comprehension: *General principles of note-taking* 108

## Unit Four Improving your reading

A Listening comprehension: *Increasing reading speed* 110

C Lecture: *Increasing reading comprehension* 111

## Unit Five Lectures

A Listening comprehension: *Listening to lectures* 114

## Unit Six Using a dictionary

A Listening comprehension: *What kind of dictionary?* 116

C Lecture: *What a dictionary contains* 117

## **Unit Seven**

### **Reading textbooks**

A Listening comprehension: *Skimming* 119

## **Unit Eight**

### **Learning in small groups: Tutorials and seminars**

A Listening comprehension: *Improving your speaking ability* 121

C Lecture: *Tutorials and seminars* 122

## **Unit Nine**

### **Writing reports and articles**

A Listening comprehension: *Judgement skills in writing* 124

## **Unit Ten**

### **Learning and remembering**

A Listening comprehension: *Memory* 126

C Lecture: *Methods of improving learning procedures* 127

## **Unit Eleven**

### **Examinations**

A Listening comprehension: *Preparing for the examination* 130

## **Unit Twelve**

### **Reference and research techniques**

A Listening comprehension: *Reference techniques: Using a library* 132

C Lecture: *Research techniques: Planning and conducting research* 133

# Unit One

## Study problems and objectives

### A Listening comprehension: Study problems

Listen carefully to the talk which you are about to hear. Answer each question below *when you are instructed to do so*.

#### Study Problems

- 1 According to what you have just heard, write T if the following statement is true or F if it is false:

Generally study problems are more serious for foreign learners than for native speakers.

- 2 Complete the following sentence by writing one word to replace each blank:

Sometimes students confuse study problems with \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ problems.

- 3 Choose the best answer, *a*, *b* or *c*:

Language is often a serious problem in studying at advanced levels because

*a* a more literary kind of English is now required.

*b* the classroom variety of English learnt at school is unsuitable.

*c* the student is now required to read more artificial textbooks.

- 4 You will now hear about the language skills or abilities which you will need in your study. Listen carefully and write down the listening and speaking skills which you will require.

- 5 Complete the following sentence by writing one word to replace each blank:

The student is expected to \_\_\_\_\_ widely and to \_\_\_\_\_ for himself at college or university level.

### B Note-taking: Word omissions

#### General

Words can be divided into two broad classes: *content* words and *form* words.

Content words are generally nouns, adjectives, verbs and (most) adverbs; form words are the words which are used to provide the pattern or framework of the

## 2 Study problems and objectives

sentence. In the following sentence, for example, the form words are *There, is, an, of, the, and of*:

There is an increasing awareness of the importance of correct study habits. It is often possible to omit form words in notes (eg auxiliaries, determiners, pronouns). Since these words form the framework of sentences, many can be omitted without consequent loss of meaning. Such words, in fact, are usually omitted in telegrams as well as in notes. Look at the following sets of content words: it is possible to guess the general pattern of the sentence in which each set originally appeared. (Note that dashes are frequently used to denote missing form words.)

- i Increasing awareness – importance correct study habits.
- ii Book – possible practise skills needed.  
= In this book it is possible to practise the skills that are needed.
- iii Language required (by) student – different (from) classroom English learnt.  
= The language which is required by the student will now be very different from the classroom kind of English he learnt.

### Words often omitted

#### 1 *Be, have, and do*

- a *Be, have* and *do* as auxiliaries are usually omitted in notes, especially when there are other indications of tense: present/past participle forms (eg *studying, studied*), prepositions (eg *about, over*), adverbs (eg *quickly, carefully*) and adverbial groups (eg *at a fast pace*), etc.

The student ^ performing different language tasks when he takes notes.

Students at university or college ^ certain advantages over younger students at school.

Most students ^ not realise that study problems exist.

- b *Be* can be omitted when it denotes the passive (eg *English is spoken* a lot in Singapore).

Syllabuses, examinations and teaching ^ all largely determined by literary values.

- c When followed by a noun/a pronoun/an adjective, *be* is often replaced by the sign =.

Study problems = major difficulties to many foreign learners.

#### 2 *Noun determiners*

Unless there is danger of ambiguity, omit *a, an, the* and *some* in notes.

^ More familiar ^ student is with ^ particular subject, ^ easier he will cope with ^ university course.

#### 3 *Formal/Impersonal subjects*

*There is/There are* and the impersonal *It* used as a substitute subject can be omitted without loss of meaning.

There are two kinds of approaches to study: the positive kind \_\_\_\_\_

Two kinds of approaches to study: positive \_\_\_\_\_

It is impossible to be successful unless the student thinks for himself.

Impossible be successful unless student thinks for himself.

#### 4 Personal pronouns

- a Pronouns (*I, me, my, mine, myself*, etc) are omitted in notes if (i) there is no ambiguity and (ii) the pronouns are not used to denote an important contrast.

Many of the problems are not wholly language ones. They are chiefly study problems.

Many problems – not wholly language = chiefly study problems.

- b *We, you* and *one* used in an impersonal or general sense are omitted in notes.

We learn the most complex skill of all when we are young children: we learn to speak.

Learn most complex skill when young children = to speak.

#### 5 Nouns and noun groups

The same or identical nouns are often used by speakers to refer back, thus linking ideas and providing cohesion and continuity. Such words (which merely repeat information) can generally be omitted in notes.

Note-taking involves more than aural comprehension and the ability to retain information. Note-taking is, in fact, a complex series of skills.

Note-taking = more than aural comprehension & retention = complex series of skills.

#### 6 Miscellaneous word omissions

The following can also be omitted in notes:

- a relative pronouns (*that, which, whom*) when they are objects in adjectival clauses.

The language that a student requires will differ in certain ways from the textbook kind of English which the student learnt at school.

Language student requires = different from textbook English learnt at school.

- b *of the* in phrases like *most of the, all of the, many of the*, etc.

Many of the language skills that are required now were not practised at school.

Many language skills required now – not practised at school.

- c *to* when used to introduce an infinitive.

The ability to take notes is a skill which is often neglected.

Ability take notes = skill often neglected.

- d prepositions indicating time, direction, place (eg *at, in, on*) and those prepositions which can normally be inferred from the verb/adjective/noun (eg *forget about, aim at, interested in, certain of, similar to*).

#### 4 Study problems and objectives

It is important for each student to obtain a rough idea of his progress at regular intervals.

Important each student obtains idea of progress regular intervals.

### C Reading: Study objectives

Read the following text as fast as you can in order to obtain a general idea of the content. The maximum time allowed for each section is 1 minute.

#### *Section 1*

The first step in developing effective methods of study is for the student to establish worthwhile but realistic objectives. These goals must be neither too easy nor too difficult to attain: goals which are easy offer the student very little incentive to make any real effort since they neither stimulate interest nor give rise to the feelings of satisfaction which result from having achieved something worthwhile. Most people, for example, tend to play badly in a game against a poor opponent but play well against a good opponent: the poor opponent offers little competition but the good opponent brings out the best in the other player by forcing him to increase his concentration and effort. In setting goals, most people use past experience as their chief guide, increasing their expectations slightly each time a goal is achieved. In fact, determining a particular goal is linked very closely with confidence as well as with motivation. While those who have failed badly in the past may try harder in future, repeated failure only discourages. If, therefore, the student fails to achieve several of his goals, he should consider lowering his sights and setting more realistic goals for himself.

#### True/False

Now write T if each statement is true according to the writer and F if it is false or untrue.

- 1 In order to begin to study efficiently, it is necessary to have realistic goals.
- 2 Objectives which are easy to achieve are the most effective ones in steadily improving study techniques.
- 3 A good player in any game tends to make his opponent try harder and thus play better.
- 4 After having achieved one of their goals, most people generally make their next goal slightly easier.
- 5 Students should never lower their goals even if they fail to attain them.

Instead of

Look carefully again at the text in order to complete the following statements. Give the actual words the writer uses.

- 6 Instead of saying that easy goals do not encourage the student to try hard, the writer says that easy goals provide the student with \_\_\_\_\_

- 7 Instead of saying that a good opponent makes the other player play as well as he can, the writer says that a good opponent \_\_\_\_\_
- 8 Instead of saying that most people hope they can do even better the next time after achieving their goal, the writer says that they increase \_\_\_\_\_
- 9 Instead of saying that forming a certain goal depends on how confident and interested a person is in a subject, the writer says that forming a goal is \_\_\_\_\_
- 10 Instead of saying that a student loses his enthusiasm if he constantly fails, the writer says that \_\_\_\_\_

## Section 2

The goals set can be divided into two groups: intermediate or short-term objectives and long-term objectives. Short-term objectives concern individual units of work: contributing to a tutorial, the research necessary to write a report, etc. Written assignments set by tutors can be regarded as valuable intermediate objectives, offering a sense of purpose and direction to the student. Long-term objectives concern such goals as the attainment of the particular knowledge and skills required to perform an appropriate task successfully – often, in more concrete terms, preparation for an end-of-course examination or the completion of a thesis. Clearly maximum progress will take place only when the short-term objectives are related both to one another and to a long-term objective.

### True/False

Now write T if each statement is true according to the writer and F if it is false or untrue.

- 11 There are three kinds of goals: intermediate, short-term, and long-term goals.
- 12 An example of a short-term goal is the preparation necessary in order to write a report.
- 13 Written assignments are not too useful because they usually discourage students.
- 14 The writer refers to examinations and theses as examples of long-term objectives.
- 15 It is important to relate short-term goals to a long-term objective.

### Instead of

Look carefully again at the text in order to complete the following statements. Give the actual words the writer uses.

- 16 Instead of saying that goals can be classified according to whether they are short-term objectives or long-term ones, the writer says that goals can be \_\_\_\_\_
- 17 Instead of saying that preparation for a tutorial or a report is an example of a short-term goal, the writer says that \_\_\_\_\_
- 18 Instead of describing written assignments as providing helpful guide-lines for the student, the writer says that they \_\_\_\_\_
- 19 Instead of talking about *obtaining* knowledge and skills for a certain task, the writer uses the phrase \_\_\_\_\_ of knowledge.

## 6 Study problems and objectives

- 20 Instead of saying that short-term objectives must be linked to long-term ones before the student can work at his most efficient, the writer says that \_\_\_\_\_

### Section 3

It is important for each student to obtain at regular intervals a rough idea of his progress. How are goals being achieved week by week? Methods of continuous assessment of students' work are replacing examinations – or parts of examinations – on certain courses. There are still doubts about the advantages of continuous assessment in the learning process but, if applied with care and discretion, continuous assessment can be a far more valuable means of assessing standards than an examination. Provided that methods of continuous assessment do not impart a feeling of tension and strain, they can be used to guide the student in his work and to inform him of the progress he is making. If no means of continuous assessment is available, the student should attempt to evaluate and summarise very briefly his progress week by week. Clearly, such an attempt is more difficult in a subject which teaches skills (eg learning a language, playing a musical instrument) than in a content subject (eg history, chemistry). Even as far as skills are concerned, however, it is a simple matter for the student to go back to an old exercise and do it again. The ease with which he can do what previously seemed a difficult exercise is often quite remarkable.

### True/False

Now write T if each statement is true according to the writer and F if it is false or untrue.

- 21 The student will benefit if he is made aware of his progress from time to time.
- 22 All educationalists are now aware of the advantages of continuous assessment.
- 23 Examinations are inferior to continuous assessment provided that the latter is used with care and discretion.
- 24 Each week it is helpful for students to write a summary of the progress they feel they have made.
- 25 It is unwise for students to repeat old exercises even though they may seem simple.

### Instead of

Look carefully again at the text in order to complete the following statements. Give the actual words the writer uses.

- 26 Instead of referring to ways of measuring at regular intervals a student's progress, the writer uses the phrase \_\_\_\_\_
- 27 Instead of talking about using such methods carefully and wisely, the writer talks about applying them \_\_\_\_\_
- 28 Instead of saying that continuous assessment is useful unless it makes the student feel upset and worried, the writer says that it is useful \_\_\_\_\_