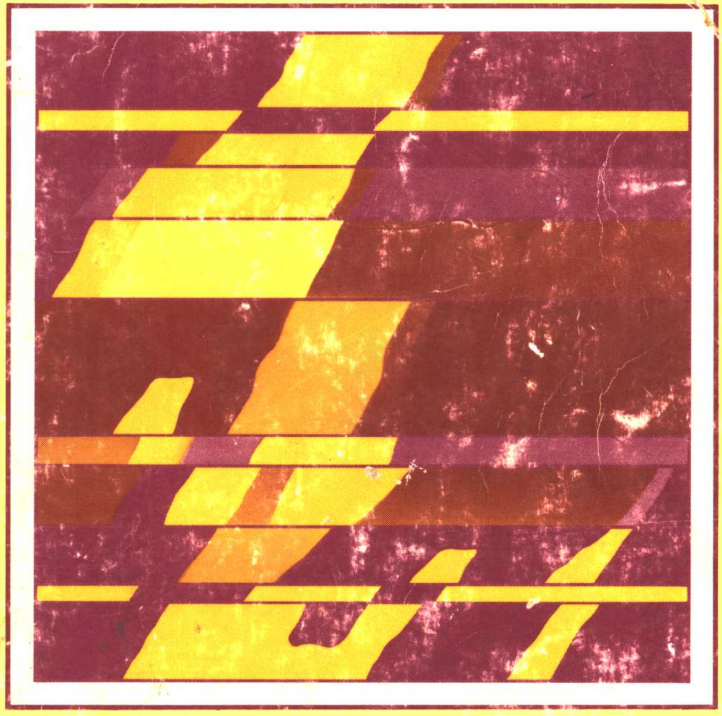
AMERICAN ENGLISH RHETORIC

THIRD EDITION



A Writing Program in English as a Second Language

ROBERT G. BANDER

Third Edition

American English Rhetoric

A Two-Track Writing Program for Intermediate and Advanced Students of English as a Second Language

Robert G. Bander

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Preface

The third edition of *American English Rhetoric* is a text for the English as a second language student who, though advanced in some skills, is still far from completely bilingual. In this edition, therefore, the readings and exercises remain challenging and adult in focus. At the same time, the text's earlier emphasis on examples and analysis has been intensified.

Like its predecessors, the third edition is a comprehensive text, combining an expository composition program with the essentials of grammar, punctuation, and vocabulary study. Grammar has been sequentially woven into the chapters, rather than being treated in the conventional handbook manner, to help students perceive that rhetoric and grammar are complementary, not separate, entities.

Changes in the Third Edition

Both rhetoric and grammar have been revised for the 1980s. Perhaps the most sweeping revision concerns grammar, which has been reorganized into a developmental sequence. Basic grammar skills are treated in Chapters 2–4; intermediate skills appear in Chapters 5–7; and advanced skills are found in Chapters 8–10. A sequenced grammar index, with a correction symbol keyed to each skill, is provided on the inside back cover.

New rhetoric material has been added to every chapter. Material on transitions and subordination has been removed from Chapter 1 and placed later in the text. In its place is a pre-writing section, "Brainstorming before You Begin," showing international students how native writers of English organize their thoughts before writing a paragraph. (A similar pre-writing section related to the whole composition appears in Chapter 5.) A rhetoric index appears on the inside front cover.

Chapter 1 contains some fresh prose passages to reinforce the concepts of unity, coherence, and the topic sentence. Chapters 2–4 each open with four short new model paragraphs by such writers as Joan Didion, Alvin Toffler, and Tom Wolfe. Each paragraph is followed by five analytical questions and textual discussion. A new model composition on "Precognitive Dreams" by Carl Sagan has replaced the earlier cause-and-effect model composition in Chapter 7. To Chapters 5–10, a new feature, "Writing Warm-Up," has been added to teach the important undergraduate skill of writing a summary.

Two new grammar units appear in the main body of the text: "Verbals" in Chapter 5 and "Noun Clause" in Chapter 10. A third grammar section of particular reference interest to international students in the new Appendix 4, "Verb Tenses and Forms." In addition, the principal parts of irregular verbs in Appendix 5 have been alphabetized for easier reference.

The "Questions for Discussion and Review" have been removed from each chapter of the text and placed in the Instructor's Manual.

Rhetoric on Many Levels

The first four chapters of *American English Rhetoric* deal with writing of the paragraph; the last six chapters are addressed to writing the full-length composition. Chapter 5 is the pivotal chapter. As a transition between paragraph and composition writing, it gives information on "Writing a Longer Composition," "The Composition Outline," "The Thesis Statement," and "Linking Paragraphs Together."

Each chapter's composition assignment offers two distinctly different sets of composition topics and approaches to composition. Group 1 topics, in addition to being more basic than those of Group 2, are also more highly structured. Group 1 topics provide practice in the same method of expository development studied earlier in a chapter. In contrast, Group 2 topics supply a creative alternative to Group 1 subjects for students who are especially imaginative or advanced. These writing assignments are drawn from James Thurber fables and Woody Allen fantasies; "Doonesbury," "Peanuts," and *New Yorker* cartoons; a cryonics advertisement and the composition of a French student; the fanciful novel *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland;* and the rock music periodical *Rolling Stone.* As students move through the book, composition topics become increasingly more complex.

The new pre-writing section, "Summary Writing" in Chapters 5–10 adds a valuable dimension to students' study of composition. After instruction in summary writing and examples is given in Chapter 5, the end-of-chapter section asks students to summarize progressively more sophisticated material: first a paragraph, then a short reading selection, and finally a developed essay.

To improve their skill as writers, students will find eighty-three practice exercises in rhetoric, grammar, and punctuation spaced throughout the text. As with the composition topics, the practice exercises and the vocabulary study have been developed with an inner consistency of gradually increasing proficiency.

The idea for this text grew from my reading of two scholarly articles. One was a monograph by Jean Praninskas. The second was "Cultural Thought Patterns in Intercultural Education" (*Language Learning*, XVI, nos. 1–2, 1–20), by Professor Robert B. Kaplan of the University of Southern California.

Experience in teaching European, Asian, and Arab students in their own countries has guided me in developing this text. From classes at Liceo Scientifico Vittorio Veneto in Milan and at the University of Pisa; from students at the University of Petroleum and Minerals in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia; from colleagues at the Binational Center in Bangkok; and from East-West Center students at the University of Hawaii have come the ideas that are reflected on these pages.

I want to thank Professor Louis Trimble of the University of Washington for helping to identify material on scientific and technical writing to add to the text. Professional collaboration of a very high order was provided by Patty Werner de Poleo, who developed and tested new exercise materials on modals in her ESL classes at the University Extension Division, University of California at Santa Barbara. Special thanks go to Dr. David Eskey and Dr. Jane Woodward, who made it possible for me to field-test the new material for the third edition in classes at the University of Southern California's American Language Institute during the summer of 1981. The classroom reaction of students from such diverse parts of the world as the Far East (China, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, and Indonesia), the Middle East (Kuwait and Saudi Arabia), and Latin America (Ecuador and Peru) has greatly helped to shape and refine this new edition.

R.G.B.

Contents

1 The English Paragraph

Drawing by W. Steig; © 1970, The New Yorker *Magazine, Inc.*

A lonely clown in a drifting lifeboat has a special problem. The clown has always delighted audiences with a painted-on smile. Floating on the sea, though, the clown smiles at a world that cannot understand the smile. Suddenly the clown can no longer communicate.

When you are learning to write in a language that is not your own, you have a similar problem. Like the clown, you must learn to communicate in terms that your new world will understand. But you probably find it hard to express in a new language the many ideas filling your mind. To release these bottled-up ideas, you must gain an understanding of the grammar and writing techniques of the new language. Only when you have done this will you be able to present yourself to best advantage in writing.

This chapter offers the basic information that you need to begin to write English well. To start with, you will examine the nature of the English paragraph. The Chinese have a saying, "A journey of 1,000 miles begins with the first step." Studying the material in this chapter is your first step toward mastery of written English.

Unity

For some international students, the concept of an English paragraph may be quite new. Just as a sentence is a group of words conveying a complete thought, so a paragraph is a group of sentences advancing the thought somewhat further. Each paragraph should leave you more informed at the end than you were at the beginning. A paragraph is normally identified by having its first sentence indented a few spaces. This indentation tells a reader that the material in the paragraph represents a separate unit of thought.

The fact that an English paragraph constitutes a separate unit of thought is its most important quality. In composing a paragraph, a writer discusses only one topic or one aspect of a topic. This characteristic of a paragraph is known as **unity**, or singleness of purpose. Because an English paragraph concentrates on a single idea, all the facts, examples, and reasons used to develop that idea must be relevant. A writer who introduces material that is not directly related to a paragraph's topic runs the risk of losing a reader.

Study the following short paragraph to help you better understand what unity is. Notice that every sentence expands on the topic announced in the opening sentence: the beginnings of the sea. The writer even restates the subject in the fourth sentence to remind her reader (and perhaps herself) that all of the details toward the end of the paragraph should explain how the earth got its ocean—and *only* that topic.

> Beginnings are apt to be shadowy, and so it is with the beginnings of that great mother of life, the sea. Many people have debated how and when the earth got its ocean, and it is not surprising that their explanations do not always agree. For the plain and inescapable truth is that no one was there to see, and in the absence of eyewitness accounts there is bound to be a certain amount of disagreement. So if I tell here a story of how the young planet Earth acquired an ocean, it must be a story pieced together