

A large, stylized blue letter 'C' that frames the title text. It is positioned on the left and right sides of the title, with its open ends facing outwards.

A Comprehensive English Grammar

**C.E.ECKERSLEY
and
J.M.ECKERSLEY**

BOOK 1

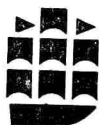
A Comprehensive English Grammar

FOR FOREIGN STUDENTS

C. E. ECKERSLEY, M.A.

AND

J. M. ECKERSLEY, M.A.



LONGMAN

LONGMAN GROUP LIMITED
London

*Associated companies, branches and representatives
throughout the world*

© C.E. Eckersley and J.M. Eckersley 1960

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 1960

*New impressions *1973; *1975 (twice); *1976;
*1977; *1978; *1979*

ISBN 0 582 52042 8

PREFACE

THIS grammar has been prepared with three objectives in view. First, while covering in an up-to-date manner the ground common to all English grammars, it is designed particularly to meet the needs of the *foreign* student of English. So, for example, the tenses of the verb, the use of prepositions and 'phrasal verbs', the articles, and word order are dealt with in considerable detail; many examples are given of the commonest sentence patterns in English; and there are tables showing the uses of the determinative words—all frequent sources of difficulty to the foreign student.

Secondly, it is intended to be really comprehensive, in that it will, as far as possible, provide an answer to any grammatical problem the student of English is likely to encounter. Brief accounts of the history of the language and of the phonetics and intonation of English have been included also, since these matters—although not strictly 'grammar'—are bound to be of interest and importance to most students of the language.

Lastly, it is meant to be a *practical* grammar, one that is suitable both for work in class and for students working on their own; so it is provided with a very full index and with plenty of exercises.¹

Although this grammar has not been directed at any particular examination, the needs of examination candidates have been borne in mind, and it should give ample material to prepare students for the English language papers set in any of the usual examinations.

Our thanks are due to Mr. H. W. Acomb, M.A., and to Mr. S. C. White, M.A., for their assistance in the preparation of the exercises and the Key.

C. E. E.

J. M. E.

¹ A Key to the Exercises is published separately.

CONTENTS

	<i>page</i>
PREFACE	vii
INTRODUCTION	I
<i>Chapter 1.</i> THE PARTS OF SPEECH	3
Classification by Function	
<i>Chapter 2.</i> THE SIMPLE SENTENCE	8
Subjects and Objects; Enlargements; The Complement; Word Order in Simple Sentences; Declarative Sentences; Questions; Commands, Requests and Invitations	
<i>Chapter 3.</i> NOUNS (1) KINDS	19
Countable and Uncountable Nouns; Compound Nouns; The Grammatical Function of Nouns	
<i>Chapter 4.</i> NOUNS (2) NUMBER	26
Formation of the Plural; Irregular Plurals; Foreign Plurals; Concord; Plurals and Compound Nouns; Forms of Address; Nouns with no Plural Form; Nouns with no Singular Form; Plurals with Different Meanings	
<i>Chapter 5.</i> NOUNS (3) GENDER	41
Masculine and Feminine Forms	
<i>Chapter 6.</i> NOUNS (4) CASE	45
The Possessive (Genitive) Case; Subjective and Objective Genitive; Elliptical use of the Genitive; The Double Possessive	
<i>Chapter 7.</i> THE ARTICLES	51
The Indefinite Article; The Definite Article; Idiomatic use of <i>the</i>	

<i>Chapter 8.</i>	ADJECTIVES	<i>page</i> 64
The Attributive and Predicative use; Adjectives functioning as Nouns; Nouns functioning as Adjectives; The Formation of Adjectives from Nouns; Participles used Adjectivally; The Formation of the Negative		
<i>Chapter 9.</i>	COMPARISON OF ADJECTIVES	70
Notes on Comparison; Idiomatic Constructions; The position of Adjectives; Possessive Adjectives; Other types of Adjectives		
<i>Chapter 10.</i>	DETERMINATIVES	89
Tables of usage; Notes on some Determinatives		
<i>Chapter 11.</i>	PRONOUNS	97
Person in Pronouns; Case; Notes on Personal Pronouns; Possessive Pronouns; The Double Possessive; Demonstrative Pronouns; Reflexive and Emphasizing Pronouns; Interrogative Pronouns; Interrogatives; Idiomatic Expressions; Indefinite Pronouns; Notes on some Indefinite Pronouns; Relative Pronouns		
<i>Chapter 12.</i>	VERBS	143
Regular and Irregular Verbs; Notes and Examples; Transitive and Intransitive Verbs; Causative use of Verbs		
<i>Chapter 13.</i>	VERBS (2) TENSE	157
The Simple Tenses; The Continuous Tenses; The Perfect Tenses		
<i>Chapter 14.</i>	VERBS (3) THE SPECIAL FINITES (i)	182
Formation of the Negative; Formation of the Interrogative; Question Phrases; Short Answers; Elliptical Sentences; The Emphatic Form; Position of Adverbs; Third Person Singular.		
THE SPECIAL FINITES (ii): <i>be, have</i> ; causative use of <i>have</i> ; <i>have to</i> ; <i>can</i> ; <i>could</i> ; <i>do</i> ; <i>should</i> ; <i>would</i> ; <i>may</i> ; <i>might</i> ; <i>must</i> ; <i>need</i> ; <i>ought</i> ; <i>dare</i> ; <i>used</i> (to)		
<i>Chapter 15.</i>	VERBS (4) VOICE	219

CONTENTS

v

	<i>page</i>
<i>Chapter 16.</i> VERBS (5) MOOD	225
The Imperative; The Subjunctive	
<i>Chapter 17.</i> VERBS (6) THE NON-FINITES	230
The Infinitive; The Particle <i>to</i> without the Infinitive; Functions of the Infinitive; The Split Infinitive; The Participles; Position of Participles; Participles with the Infinitive; Participles as Adjective Clause Equivalents; Participles as Adverb Clause Equivalents; Mis-related Participles; Compound Participles; The Gerund; Verbs followed by the Gerund; Verbs followed by the Infinitive; Verbs followed by Gerund or Infinitive	
<i>Chapter 18.</i> ADVERBS	251
Classification according to meaning; The Formation of Adverbs; Adverbs and Adjectives with the same form; Adverbs with two forms; Classification according to Position; Inversion with Adverbs; Comparison; Notes on certain Adverbs; <i>quite, already, still, ago, too, but</i>	
<i>Chapter 19.</i> PREPOSITIONS AND 'ADVERBIAL PARTICLES'	277
Prepositions and Adverbs; Position of the Preposition; Illustrations of the usage of Prepositions and Adverbial Particles	
<i>Chapter 20.</i> CONNECTIVES	306
Conjunctions; The <i>and</i> Group; The <i>but</i> Group; The <i>or</i> Group; The <i>so</i> Group; Subordinate Conjunctions	
<i>Chapter 21.</i> INTERJECTIONS AND EXCLAMATIONS	315
Exclamatory sentences	
<i>Chapter 22.</i> SENTENCES AND CLAUSES	318
Compound, Double, Multiple Sentences; Complex Sentences	
<i>Chapter 23.</i> SUBORDINATE CLAUSES	324
Adjective Clauses; Defining and Non-defining Clauses; Adjective Clauses with Formal Subject <i>it</i> ; Noun clauses; Adverb Clauses	

	<i>page</i>
<i>Chapter 24.</i> CONDITIONAL CLAUSES	347
Open Conditions; Tenses used in Open Conditions; Hypothetical Conditions; Suppositions; Conditions expressed by Inversion	
<i>Chapter 25.</i> ANALYSIS OF SENTENCES	355
<i>Chapter 26.</i> DIRECT AND INDIRECT SPEECH	361
Statements; Indirect Questions; Indirect Commands	
<i>Chapter 27.</i> PUNCTUATION	376
<i>Chapter 28.</i> SENTENCE PATTERNS	385
<i>Chapter 29.</i> THE PRONUNCIATION OF ENGLISH	403
The Sounds of English; Stress; Rhythm; Intonation	
<i>Chapter 30.</i> A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE	417
	433
	INDEX

INTRODUCTION

Most of the earlier grammarians, particularly those of the eighteenth century when the English language was being 'systematized', held the view that one of their functions, perhaps their main function, was to keep the language 'pure', to stamp out errors that were constantly creeping in and to formulate rules that would keep the language on the course they believed it ought to take. The rules were based on Latin syntax, and it was into this Procrustean bed that the grammarians tried to fit the English language, largely disregarding the fact that English was no longer, as it once had been, a highly inflected language. In fact, in the whole of modern English there are really only two major inflections¹ and four or five minor ones², for the English language has changed in the 1,500 years that it has been in England from being a synthetic to an analytic one in which inflection has been practically entirely replaced by two other phenomena: (1) Structural words (like *from*, *in*, *shall*, *may*, *ought*, etc.), and (2) Word Order.

The grammarian of to-day no longer believes that he should attempt the impossible task of 'controlling' the language and directing the course that he thinks it ought to take; he realizes that English is a living language, constantly changing and developing in accordance not with man's laws but with its own genius. Nor does he think that the function of a grammar book is to lay down laws to teach people how they *ought* to speak and write. His task is simply to state how, so far as he can judge, certain people *do* speak and write at the present time. The grammar of a language is the scientific record of the actual phenomena of that language, written and spoken. So, in the present volume we have tried to present the facts of modern English usage so far as we could ascertain them; any

¹ For Number in Nouns and Past Tense in Verbs.

² For Genitive of Nouns, Objective forms of Pronouns, Comparison of some Adjectives, 3rd Person Singular in the Simple Present Tense of some Verbs, and a few remnants of the Subjunctive Mood,

'rules' that we have given are merely conclusions drawn from these facts. If at any time a rule does not coincide with the usage, it is the rule that is wrong, and it will be the job of future grammarians to change it.

EXERCISES

- I From your own experience in learning English, try to explain how important you consider the study of grammar to be in learning a foreign language.
- II Do you consider that the study of grammar is more important or less important in learning English than it is in learning your own native language? Give reasons for your answer.
- III The Introduction to this book says, on page one: 'English has changed from a synthetic language to an analytic one'. Compare this with what has happened in your own language and say whether you think this change has made English easier or more difficult for the foreign student to learn.
- IV In your opinion, does the abandonment of belief in grammatical rules tend towards a deterioration in the style and quality of a language as it is used in everyday life?

CHAPTER ONE

THE PARTS OF SPEECH

The words that compose the English language—or any other language—can be classified in various ways. Much time and effort has been spent in trying to settle what names should be given to these categories. It seems to us that there is little point in giving anything but the most general definitions of the Parts of Speech, in the first place because it is almost impossible to give a definition which is exact and comprehensive, or with which every grammarian would agree; secondly because it is hardly necessary, since the conception of 'Noun', 'Verb', etc., will almost certainly be familiar to the student in his own language. It seems to us more important that the student should be given examples of the various Parts of Speech and should see, as he will in the pages that follow, exactly how these words behave. We have therefore adhered, in the main, to the traditional,¹ most familiar definitions. Under this system all the words in the English language can be grouped, according to the work they do, into eight classes. These are the *Parts of Speech*.

They are:

I. Words that are the names of things or people or places, e.g. *house, hat, iron, Mary, Russia, London, sweetness, speech, crowd, army.*

Words that do this work are called NOUNS.

II. Words that can be used instead of nouns, so that we can refer to people or things without really naming them and being compelled to repeat the names too frequently, e.g.

¹ Professor C. C. Fries, the former Director of the English Language Institute of the University of Michigan and perhaps the most iconoclastic of modern grammarians, writes:

'On the whole, I believe it will be found that most of the traditional terms, though often badly named, correspond to real facts and distinctions in the linguistic material. It may reasonably be doubted whether a serviceable grammar which dispenses entirely with such terms as noun and verb will ever be written: . . . To my mind it is not so much the traditional terms that are unacceptable as the explanations of them which are normally given.'

I, you, them, who, that, himself, someone.

Words that do this are called PRONOUNS.

III. Words that qualify a noun by making its meaning clearer, fuller, or more exact. *Examples:*

a *bad* egg, a *blue* dress, the book is *new*.

Words that do this are called ADJECTIVES.

There are a number of words of various types that are sometimes grouped as adjectives, words, for example, like *a(n), the, some, each, no, much*, etc. These are discussed in the section Determinatives. (Chapter Ten.)

IV. Words that express the idea of action or being, that affirm that a person or thing is, does or suffers something. *Examples:*

The boys *played* football.

He *is* hungry.

The enemy *was defeated*.

Words of this kind are called VERBS.

V. Words that we can add to a verb to make its meaning clearer, fuller or more exact. *Examples:*

He ran *quickly*. I saw him *yesterday*.

Words like these are ADVERBS.

VI. Words that are used with nouns or pronouns (generally, but not always, being placed in front of them) and show the relationship between the noun or pronoun and another word, often expressing abstract relationship of case or of time or place. *Examples:*

I sent the parcel *to* him; it went *by* air mail. The smoke went *up* the chimney. The desk was *near* the window.

Words that do work like this are PREPOSITIONS.

VII. Words that are used to join words, phrases or sentences. *Examples:*

Jack *and* Jill; a boy with a dirty face *but* a pleasant smile.

He worked hard *because* he wanted to succeed.

Words like this are CONJUNCTIONS.

VIII. Words that express a sudden feeling or emotion. These words do not enter into the syntactical construction of the sentence. *Examples:*

Hello! Oh! Ah!

Words like these are INTERJECTIONS.

CLASSIFICATION BY FUNCTION

It is most important to remember that words are classified into parts of speech according to their function, that is according to the work that they do and not according to their form. There are in fact a great many words that can be two, three or even more parts of speech according to the work they do. Take for example these sentences.

- (1) He came by a very *fast* train.
- (2) William ran very *fast*.
- (3) They are going to *fast* for three days; during that time they won't eat anything.
- (4) At the end of his three day *fast* he will have a very light meal.

In (1) *fast* is an adjective, in (2) it is an adverb, in (3) a verb, and in (4) a noun.

Or note the differing uses of *watch* in:

My father gave me a *watch* for my birthday.

I am going to *watch* a football match.

Rex is a good *watch* dog.

Or of *spring* in:

The *spring* of my watch is broken.

The dog tried to *spring* over the gate.

I love *spring* flowers.

Words like *drink*, *look*, *smoke*, *wash*, *swim*, *drive*, *try* are all generally used as verbs, but, especially in familiar conversation, we put 'have a' before them ('have a drink, look, try, etc.'), and they become nouns. Words like *shoulder*, *head*, *finger*, *eye*, *elbow*, *hand*, etc., are generally nouns; but we can 'shoulder our way', 'head a football or a procession', 'finger an object', 'eye a person', 'elbow someone else aside' or 'hand him a cup of tea'. And then these words are all verbs.

EXERCISES

I Use the following words as (a) nouns, and (b) verbs:

house, iron, crowd, tie, smoke, dress, air, book, step.

- II Use the following as (a) nouns, and (b) verbs, and indicate the change in pronunciation:

object, present, record, produce, conflict, conduct, desert, contest, permit.

Add to the list of such words.

- III Substitute pronouns for the nouns and noun phrases underlined in the following sentences, which are impossible or inelegant as they stand:

1. John looked at Mary, but Mary was looking at Mary in the looking-glass.
2. If you don't want the paper, give it to a person who does.
3. The speaker looked his questioner in the eye; then the speaker gave his questioner his answer.
4. Oxford (Oxford is famous for its university) is now becoming industrialized.

- IV(a) Insert suitable adjectives where the dashes stand:

1. We didn't see each other again for a — time.
2. In spite of his — strength he was — to swim across the — river, as the current was too —.
3. The car turned the corner at — speed.
4. The — cat lay sleeping in the — sunshine.
5. The door is — but the windows are —.

- IV(b) Insert suitable adverbs where the dashes stand:

1. It was — getting dark when we began to climb the — rising incline.
2. The men were not — — awake.
3. He was — accused of the crime and — acquitted.
4. I — have eggs and bacon for breakfast, but — I take fish.
5. Have you — been to the Zoo? Yes, I — go there.

- V Name the parts of speech of the words underlined in the following sentences:

1. It's hard work, but I know you can work hard.
2. He's dead keen to get on, but now that his best friend is dead, he is finding life deadly monotonous. Monotony is nearly always deadly.
3. He struck low. Climb high. The flowers look nice. Cut the slices thin.

- VI Make sentences using each of the following words as two different parts of speech (not necessarily in the same sentence), and say what parts of speech they are:
August (august); alternate; minute; invalid; absent; frequent.

[N.B.—Mark where the stress falls in each example.]

- VII Pick out the verbs in this passage and classify them as expressing (i) action, (ii) a state.

John was late. He hurried down to breakfast, said something to his father, which the latter did not seem to understand, glanced at the clock, got even more worried and rushed out of the house. He doubted whether he would ever become manager, for he had been reprimanded too often for not being punctual.

- VIII Pick out four prepositions and three conjunctions from the passage in question VII.

- IX Replace the dashes by suitable interjections or exclamations:

(a) —, I did not succeed! (b) —, where have you been all this time? (c) — no, I really couldn't! (d) — there's a car coming! (e) —, I *knew* that would happen!

- X Arrange the words in the following passage in columns according to the parts of speech which they are:

'It must not be imagined that a walking tour, as some would have us fancy, is merely a better or worse way of seeing the country. There are many ways of seeing landscape quite as good; and none more vivid, in spite of canting dilettantes, than from a railway train. But landscape on a walking tour is quite accessory. He who is indeed of the brotherhood does not voyage in quest of the picturesque, but of certain jolly humours—of the hope and spirit with which the march begins at morning, and the peace and spiritual repletion of the evening's rest. . . .'

Robert Louis Stevenson, *Walking Tours*.

- XI Explain, and illustrate in sentences, two senses in which the following words can be used. Name the part of speech of each:

(1) sound. (2) oil. (3) master. (4) clear. (5) speed.
 (6) water. (7) deal. (8) butter. (9) ring. (10) police.

- XII Define the functions of the eight parts of speech and give two examples of each with words not already used in chapter I.

CHAPTER TWO

THE SIMPLE SENTENCE

SUBJECTS AND OBJECTS

A Simple sentence¹ is one that contains a finite² verb (and only one finite verb). It does one of four things:

- (1) makes a statement;
- (2) asks a question;
- (3) gives a command or makes a request;
- (4) makes an exclamation.

Examples:

Mr. Brown teaches this class. (*Statement*)

Do you understand me? (*Question*)

Open the door. (*Command*)

Please help me with my work. (*Request*)

How cold it is! (*Exclamation*)

A sentence is composed, usually, of two parts, the SUBJECT and the PREDICATE. Take, for example, the following sentences:

The boy hit the dog. The dog bit the boy.

The girl read the books. The books pleased the girl.

We can divide them like this:

I	2
The boy	hit the dog.
The dog	bit the boy.
The girl	read the books.
The books	pleased the girl.

In the first part there is a person (or thing) that we are talking about. The second part is what we say about this person or thing. Part 1 is the subject, Part 2 is the predicate. The subject of a sentence is the word (or group of words) denoting the person or thing about which something is said.

¹ Sentences and clauses are dealt with fully on pages 318 to 358.

² For finite and non-finite verbs see p. 143.

The predicate of a sentence is what is said about the subject. Nouns or pronouns that are in the subject are in the NOMINATIVE case.

Some verbs (Transitive verbs, see p. 154) express an action that passes over from the subject to someone or something else, from the doer of the action to the receiver of the action. Thus, for example, in the first sentence above, the action of hitting passes over from the boy to the dog; in the second sentence the action of biting from the dog to the boy. The receiver of these actions is called the OBJECT. The person or thing expressed by the object stands in a relation to a 'doer' and an action. The noun or pronoun that signifies this is in the OBJECTIVE case.¹ So we could divide the sentences above like this:

SUBJECT	PREDICATE	
	<i>Verb</i>	<i>Object</i>
The boy	hit	the dog
The dog	bit	the boy
The girl	read	the books
The books	pleased	the girl

Whether a noun is the subject or object of a sentence is shown not by its form but by its position in the sentence.

There are some verbs that do not take an object, e.g.

The dog *ran* away. The boy *cried*. The girl *laughed*.

Verbs that do not take an object are called INTRANSITIVE Verbs. (See p. 154.)

ENLARGEMENTS

Phrases or words other than an object may accompany both a transitive or an intransitive verb in a sentence. These ENLARGEMENTS of the verb are of various types, e.g.

He walked *slowly*. (MANNER)

The dog jumped *through the window*. (PLACE)

They arrived *on Christmas day*. (TIME)

¹ The concept of case corresponds to a difference of form only in certain pronouns (see p. 98).