

ENGLISH SENTENCE PATTERNS

understanding and producing
English grammatical structures
AN ORAL APPROACH

English Language Institute Staff

ROBERT LADO, director

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an intensive course in English

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Foreword

These are linguistically graded lessons to teach students to speak and understand English sentences.

These lessons begin with simple but important patterns (I-X), build up cumulatively through intermediate patterns (XI-XX), and proceed into advanced patterns (XXI-XXXV).

The lessons are well adapted to intermediate students, who may proceed at the rate of one lesson per teaching hour. Beginning students, on the other hand, should proceed at no more than half a lesson per hour. Advanced students move rapidly through the first twenty lessons, omitting those exercises which do not challenge them, but working through the frames to understand better what they already know in part. Lessons XXI through XXXV challenge even the advanced students.

The lessons are most effective when used simultaneously with ENGLISH PATTERN PRACTICES, which provides additional drill for the patterns introduced here. Advanced students may not need the extra practices as much as intermediate or beginning students.

The set which together constitutes the INTENSIVE COURSE IN ENGLISH of the English Language Institute, University of Michigan, includes the following four titles: ENGLISH SENTENCE PATTERNS, ENGLISH PATTERN PRACTICES, ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION, and ENGLISH VOCABULARY.

Robert Lado

Contributors to the Revised Edition

The Third Revised Edition adds Lessons XXI through XXXV and completes the set of "grammar" lessons. GERALD DYKSTRA in close co-operation with ROBERT LADO had revised these lessons to their previous stage. THEODOSIA COPLAS helped with the exercises and prepared Lesson XXXV. The chief contributors to the revision of the lessons as they now appear are the following:

WILLIAM H. BUELL, who revised Lessons XXI through XXXV in the light of suggestions and criticisms made by the English Language Institute Staff and CHARLES C. FRIES, and made minor changes in Lessons I through XIX.

EDWARD T. ERAZMUS, who revised and expanded the exercises in these lessons, made valuable contributions to other aspects of the revision and prepared the review lessons X, XX, and XXX.

All revisions were thoroughly discussed at regular meetings of the revision staff, which included the above two and RUTH CARTER HOK, BRYCE VAN SYOC, MARY JANE MASLOOB, and myself as Director. Final copy for the printer was read and corrected by me, on whom falls ultimately the responsibility for any errors or inadequacies in the content and form of the lessons.

Robert Lado

Preface

Considerable controversy has for more than a half century centered upon the usefulness of "grammar" for the practical mastery of a foreign language. Part of the difficulty in reaching agreement in such controversies arises from the fact that "grammar" means very different materials to different persons. To some it means memorizing paradigms of declensions and conjugations; to some it means recognizing and naming the "parts of speech" and diagraming sentences; to others it means learning and applying rules of "correctness" based upon "logic" or the "laws of thought." "Knowing" grammar has most often meant the ability to use and respond to some fifty or sixty technical names and to talk about sentences in terms of these technical names. Often, one of the chief reasons offered for learning the grammar of a language is that it provides a vocabulary to facilitate explanations concerning "correct" usage.

The materials of the English Language Institute rest upon the view that learning a foreign language consists not in learning about the language but in developing a new set of habits. One may have a great deal of information about a language without being able to use the language at all. The "grammar" lessons here set forth, therefore, consist basically of exercises to develop habits, not explanations or talk about the language.

The habits to be learned consist of patterns or molds in which the "words" must be grasped. "Grammar" from the point of view of these materials is the particular system of devices which a language uses to signal one of its various layers of meaning--structural meaning (see Charles C. Fries, The Structure of English, Chapters 4 and 13). "Knowing" this grammar for practical use means being able to produce and to respond to these signals of structural meaning. To develop such habits efficiently demands practice and more practice, especially oral practice. These lessons provide the exercises for a sound sequence of such practice to cover a basic minimum of production patterns in English.

Charles C. Fries

THE SECOND EDITION

This book is part of the 1953 revision of An Intensive Course in English for Latin-American Students. Although built especially for Spanish speakers, the materials have also been used with some selection and shift of emphasis for students of other linguistic backgrounds.

Although many of the staff of the English Language Institute have

contributed to the making of this revision, development of the exercises and the form of the materials presented here has been the contribution of Dr. Robert Lado, the Associate Director of the Institute, assisted by Gerald Dykstra. Mary Jane Masloob contributed suggestions throughout. Gloria Goldenberg in the typing and the proofreading, and Jack Logan also in the proofreading, rendered services of the highest quality.

Charles C. Fries

Teacher's Introduction

This introduction for teachers describes briefly the organization of the lessons and gives instructions on how the materials can be most profitably taught.

The Parts of the Lessons.

Each lesson consists of the following parts:

(1) An outline which presents the contents of the lesson. The outline consists of key examples followed by statements in brackets which describe briefly the pattern being presented. The statements are intended primarily for the guidance of the teacher, while the key examples are for student use.

(2) A frame that presents the materials to be taught to the student. The frame is preceded by a key example. Each frame presents a new pattern in three steps as follows:

(a) An attention pointer. A sentence directing the attention of the student to the point to be emphasized. For example, "Observe the position of TO ME and ME."

(b) The structural pattern. The pattern to be taught is given in examples, often in the form of minimal contrasts that show the essential signaling elements of the pattern. A previously taught pattern will often be included for further contrast.

(c) Comments. One or more comments are provided to summarize and to verbalize the structural changes involved.

(3) Illustrative examples. Often a pattern shows minor variations in different environments. The illustrative examples show the pattern in a variety of such environments.

(4) Practice. Exercises in which the student learns to use the pattern.

(5) Notes. The notes are sometimes directed to the teacher, giving hints on teaching or on problems. Often they comment on some additional pattern which is not taught for production but which the student should learn to recognize.

(6) Review of the key examples at the end.

Presentation of the Parts of the Lessons.

Completely oral presentation has proved its value for oral mastery. Completely oral presentation, with books closed, permits also more practice per student per hour, it helps maintain the unified attention of the class, and gives the student practice in listening as well as in speaking. The usual lesson follows these steps:

(1) The teacher may begin with oral presentation of the **KEY EXAMPLES** of the **OUTLINE** of the lesson. The class repeats the key examples. The formulas are not given at this time.

(2) The class proceeds to the first section of the lesson and again repeats the **KEY EXAMPLES**, this time only those for this section. Several repetitions will usually be required. Books are closed.

(3) The teacher then gives the **ATTENTION POINTER** very clearly. Sometimes it is advisable to repeat the attention pointer later.

(4) Immediately come the **EXAMPLES**, given orally by the teacher, repeated by the class in chorus, several times if necessary. Often the teacher selects from the **FRAME** a minimally contrasting pair of examples. This is good procedure.

(5) When the class can repeat the minimal pair of examples in chorus, the teacher writes the pair of examples on the blackboard, or presents them on a poster large enough for the whole class to see comfortably.

(6) Other examples like the ones in the minimal pair are given orally from the frame. The class repeats them. The teacher often repeats the attention pointer to guide the class toward the particular point being taught.

(7) The teacher then uses leading questions or incomplete statements to draw out the inductive **COMMENTS** from the class. There is usually a bright pupil who discovers the contrast correctly. The teacher then tries to get other members of the class to discover the contrast also. When the teacher is convinced that most of the students in the class have got the point, the teacher then restates the point to reassure the students and help the ones who for some reason did not grasp the point but are too timid to admit it.

(8) The entire process so far should not take much more than 15 per cent of the time devoted to that pattern. The remaining 85 per cent of the time should be devoted to **PRACTICE**.

(9) In the **PRACTICE** part, instead of explaining what the exercise consists of and how it is to be worked, it is better to say,

“Let’s practice. Observe the examples and continue when you understand. Examples:” Then the teacher goes ahead with three or more of the examples, rather deliberately. The class will begin to practice cautiously after about the third example and will gain confidence as the exercise progresses.

(10) When the class is doing the exercise at normal conversational speed as a group, and no gross errors are detected by the teacher, the class goes into individual practice to check for individual errors. With a class of approximately ten students it is possible and desirable for each student to recite individually at least once for each exercise.

(11) With larger classes the teacher may have to be satisfied with group practice and a spot check of individual practice. With even larger classes, it may be necessary to practice by rows, reducing individual recitation to a minimum. Even with large classes, however, when the students are trained to keep the same rhythm in group recitation, it is often possible for the teacher to detect individual errors and correct them.

(12) A number of the exercises permit more than one answer to each stimulus. Group recitation is, therefore, not possible. The entire exercise must be practiced through individual recitation in such cases.

(13) Other exercises require very long responses which would be difficult to pronounce with uniform rhythm by the entire class. Individual practice may be preferable in these cases.

(14) As a rule, when partial substitutions or changes are given, they have been carefully selected to produce responses that are both relevant to the practice and result in normal English sentences. In such cases the substitutions have to be taken in the order in which they appear, or the result might be a nonsensical construction.

(15) Normal conversational speed should always be the ultimate goal. When the teacher begins an exercise slowly, it should not remain so but should be gradually speeded up until it is rendered at somewhat normal speed. Even in slow rendition, distortions should be avoided so that the student may get a maximum of practice that will transfer to his actual use of the language in conversation.

(16) When the FRAME is followed by ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES, these examples are presented orally by the teacher and repeated by the class.

(17) When all the frames and practices have been taught in a lesson, the teacher then summarizes the lesson by giving the KEY EXAMPLES at the end. These will readily be repeated by the students.

(18) When the teacher wishes to reinforce the lesson by having the students read parts of it, they may be asked to open their books to the particular frame or exercise and to read aloud with the teacher or after the teacher. When a class knows the material well, it may be read without an immediate oral model.

(19) Homework is usually assigned as oral practice at home, using the book as the guide. Homework is checked by the teacher the following class period.

(20) Written homework consists of writing out the responses to particular exercises performed orally in class. The teacher can correct such exercises quickly and find out those who have not got the point of the pattern or are unable to apply it.

(21) Some notes found at the bottom of the page contain patterns for recognition. These are simply read aloud by the teacher, or better, presented aloud from memory by the teacher.

(22) Review lessons contain more exercises than any one class will want to do. The teacher should select those exercises that will help the particular class involved. It should be remembered that patterns are constantly being reviewed, since larger patterns often make normal use of the simpler ones taught earlier.

(23) Variety increases interest. Variety can be achieved in a thousand different ways by the resourceful teacher who lives each class with artistic vividness through the learning experience of the students.

Student's Introduction

(1) These lessons are different from most language lessons. You must expect to use them differently for best results.

(2) Remember, it isn't necessary for you to explain the grammar; it isn't necessary for you to learn the terminology. You have to UNDERSTAND the patterns and USE them. The real test is in doing the exercises rather than in discussing the frame.

(3) Learning about the problem is not your goal. You must become so familiar with the pattern that you can use it automatically. In order to attain this goal you must practice orally.

(4) Do not look at the books in class. Listen to the teacher. Listen to and repeat the examples and observe the important points. Then do the exercises with the teacher, keeping your books closed. After an exercise or lesson is finished you may want to study the book to make sure you can do the exercises orally yourself.

(5) Sometimes an exercise may be very easy for you. Use this opportunity to practice normal English intonation, speed, and rhythm.

(6) If you forget the meaning of a word in an exercise, continue the exercise and ask the teacher when it is finished.

(7) If you have questions about grammar or about the possibility of using certain words in the pattern, ask the question after the exercise has been completed. Frequently you will find that the exercise itself will have answered the question.

(8) In doing the exercises, follow the suggested sequence of substitutions as it occurs in the book. This will prevent nonsensical combinations of the material, and will permit rapid repetitions, which are so necessary to learning a second language.

(9) Get as much practice as you can in each pattern as it comes up. If the teacher asks for group practice, practice with the group. It is of little or no value simply to listen to these exercises.

(10) In individual practice, have the response ready even when it is not your turn to recite.

(11) Practice the exercises aloud after class by yourself or with a friend. Practice in the language laboratory if there is one.

(12) Use the patterns with people you meet. In short, practice as much as possible.

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