

英语阅读教材

# Language And Beyond

林平福 编

语言.

视野.

文化 .....

北京师范大学出版社

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## 编者的话

Language And Beyond 是编者在所教的硕士及博士研究生英语班（非英语专业）上使用的阅读教材。这教材是编者在美国讲学时编注的，充分利用了当时“地利人和”的优越条件。所谓“地利”，就是当地图书馆原文资料极其丰富，可以任凭精选。而“人和”则指有美国许多教授和朋友给予了热忱的支持和帮助，也提了不少对本书有益的建议。

本教材的特点是试图把学习语言同了解该语言国的文化相结合。编者认为，多数研究生学习英语的目的，主要是为了能阅读原文书刊资料，以获取大量急需的、有参考价值的新信息来促进自己的学习工作，扩大视野，以及提高自己的文化修养。

诚然，在阅读理解中，语言知识是重要的，然而，要想准确和较深刻地理解语言所要传达的信息，仅有语言知识是不够的。例如：Why don't you come to see me tomorrow at 10?这句话形式上是特殊疑问句，似乎提出了一个“为什么”，其实不然。这可以是朋友之间打电话谈约会时间的一个“建议”。——“明天上午10点来，怎样？”或“请明天上午10点来。”这就相当于“邀请”了。总之，别让你所熟悉的 Why 引入歧途。又如，不了解 Watergate，恐怕就很难确切理解 Irangate 和其它类似带 -gate 的词的用意了。再如，对方说 Thank you 时，我们一般都回答 Don't mention it, You're welcome，其实也还可以说 My pleasure, Sure, No problem, 等等。可见，学习语言是不能不了解有关国家的国情的。为此，本教材编选了有关文化、政治、音乐、体育、礼节、民族性格、价值观念等内容。

课文安排基本上是由浅入深，由短而长。为了必要的调节，编者还有意将一些较浅的文章穿插当中，这就犹如在登山过程中，有一平坡是有利于继续攀登的。

每课之后配有各种练习，用于巩固所学内容。另有补充课文 (Supplementary Readings) 及相应的思考题。此外，还有 9 课供学生进一步阅读的课文 (Further Readings)。SR 和 FR 都与正课文有直接或间接的配合。FR 主要是供水平较高的学生独立阅读用的。

本教材重点在于提高阅读能力，所以阅读量较大。编者认为，没有足够的阅读量，必达不到一定高度的质。各课的练习主要也是为了这个目的而编配的。同时，对写作和翻译能力的培养也给予了适当的注意。本教材也适合于大学高年级学生及自学者使用。

限于编者的水平，教材中错误不妥之处在所难免，欢迎读者批评指正。

林永福

一九八九年三月

## P R E F A C E

*Language and Beyond* is intended for EFL(English as a Foreign Language)students of post--intermediate level on Reading Comprehension.

As is evident from the title, in assisting the students to achieve fluency in English, this text attempts to provide an integration of language learning with culture understanding, and hence the specific aims are:

(1)to provide a context for reading and vocabulary development;

(2)to offer some aspects of American culture;

(3)to encourage an appreciation of cultural diversity and the process of intercultural communication;

(4)to help realize the importance of the relationship between language and culture.

For each selection notes have been given in English and / (or Chinese, where necessary, to ease the burden of vocabulary, language difficulties and cultural barriers so as to make reading enjoyable and rewarding. And there are for each selection articles, directly or indirectly related to it, for supplementary readings with study questions provided to facilitate comprehension. Passages for further readings are also given after some of the selections.

This text is so designed that EFL students can improve their reading, vocabulary, and other language skills while learning about culture in the United States and in other parts of the world.

The diversity of this text is an attempt to meet the variegated interests of Chinese students.

It is hoped that this text will stimulate EFL students to further explore components of culture as well as intercultural similarities and differences and to achieve a deeper insight into the language.

Comments and suggestions for improvement of the text are heartily welcome and will be deeply appreciated.

LIN, A. Yongfu

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During the past two years, the author has been in contact with scores of individuals, including those students using this book in its mimeographed form, whose comments and sugges-



tions have also led to the improvement of this book. To these people, I am also deeply indebted. The omissions of their names do not in the least reflect my lack of appreciation.

AYL, 1989

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## Lesson 1

# Listening, Speaking, Reading, And Then Writing—The Basic Order In Language Learning

*Eugene A. Nida*

The scientifically valid procedure in language learning involves listening first, to be followed by speaking. Then comes reading, and finally the writing of the language. This is just the order in which a child learns his mother tongue—first hearing, then speaking; and only after he has acquired considerable facility in understanding and speaking, does he learn to read and write. However, most traditional methods of teaching languages to adults have almost completely reversed this process—first comes reading, closely linked with writing. Then, after one is supposed to have acquired a knowledge of reading and writing, classes are offered in conversation. This major deficiency in language teaching is in large measure the result of our classical tradition of Greek and Latin studies, languages which are only known to us in the dead forms of written documents. It was falsely assumed that since the classical tongues were taught exclusively through the printed page, modern, living languages should be introduced the same way. A further practical reason why students in the classroom have rarely heard the language is that frequently the teacher is not capable of speaking the language fluently. Accordingly, the weight of tradition and the inexperience of teachers combine to make language learning a largely inefficient, boring, and discouraging process.

The infrequent, clumsy, oral reading of prescribed sentences in the textbook can scarcely be called learning to speak a language. What actually happens in so many instances is that the student begins by writing out sentences on the basis of the grammar rules. This is done almost from the first day, certainly before one has half a chance to become acquainted with the vocabulary or the flow of the language. He soon gets involved in hundreds of intricate rules, some of them purely orthographic, as in French and Hebrew, and he usually ends up by hating grammar and detesting the language. But worst of all, he rarely learns to use the language, for though he may pass tests so as to graduate, his ability to carry on a conversation in the foreign language with a native speaker is almost nil. He may spend so much time with the Masoretic pointing of Hebrew vowels that he does not get a chance to read the language extensively, and in the end his only contact with Hebrew may be an infrequent use of an analytical Hebrew—Chaldee lexicon.

Our primary trouble is that we have tackled the study of language from the wrong end. We are like the man who thinks he can learn to swim merely by reading books about swimming. In actuality, we learn by doing. The grammatical rules are valuable as we plunge into the language and need some assistance. In the same way, advanced instructions about swimming are helpful as we learn something from actual experience in the water. But reading books never makes a swimmer and learning rules never makes a practical linguist.

By setting up listening, speaking, reading, and writing in this order, we do not imply that one must be able to understand ever-

anything before beginning to speak. Certainly the child does not understand everything he hears before he begins to use the limited vocabulary which he has acquired. However, by emphasizing the primary importance of listening, we clearly indicate that learning to speak is dependent upon hearing someone else speak, not upon reading orally on the basis of certain "rules of pronunciation." When we hear words and expressions from a native speaker, we should of course imitate just as closely as possible, so that speaking follows immediately upon listening. Reading may begin rather soon if one is studying a language such as Spanish or German where the orthography rather consistently represents the meaningful distinctions in sound; but if the language is French or English, then reading traditionally spelled words is a great disadvantage at first. It is better to use some so-called "phonetic alphabet" first until one has mastered several hundred phrases. Only then should one read the traditional orthography. In the case of Chinese, it is probably better to put off the reading process for several months and until such time as one has a rather good conversational ability for simple situations. Many linguists advise mastering a vocabulary of two or three thousand words before embarking on the difficult and quite different task of learning the Chinese symbols.

Our emphasis upon the auditory perception does not mean that we should set aside all the other factors in the memory process. We should listen to expressions (an auditory process), write them down (a motor process), read them (a visual process), and then pronounce them over and over (repeated motor process). People differ in the importance which these various processes



have in their memorization of materials. Some people find it very helpful to write a phrase several times. Others consider that seeing the phrase repeatedly is just as valuable for them. Still others apparently learn most rapidly by means of auditory impressions. Whatever one's special aptitudes are, these should be cultivated and improved. Nevertheless, one should constantly try to improve one's auditory memory. Our own civilization does very little for us in this way, for our training is predominantly a matter of sight. We are frequently astonished to find people who cannot read and yet who can recite from memory entire books of the Bible. This is true of a number of people in Africa and the Orient. The auditory memory can be developed as well as any other, and anyone learning a language will do well to concentrate in so far as possible on improving this vital factor.

## NOTES

1. valid—sound; well-grounded
2. order—a sequence or arrangement of successive things
3. facility—ease in or readiness for
4. deficiency—weakness; defect; inadequacy
5. in large measure—in great measure; to a great extent
6. exclusively—only; solely
7. boring—tedious; uninteresting
8. intricate—complex; complicated
9. orthographic—pertaining to spelling
10. Hebrew—a member of the Semitic people claiming descent