

Reading Five

History of Transitional English

(In Standard English)

Part 1. The history of *Transitional English* is a very short one. It starts with the idea that on this little planet, we are all inhabitants of the same global village; we find ourselves within an infinite cosmos in the same little boat, in which we are destined to live or sink together. That is one reason why so many millions, indeed over a billion, of us have learned English.

English is the fastest spreading language in the history of the world. Like Latin, the language of ancient Rome, it's been selected by consensus of the world's population as the *lingua franca* of the known world. It has appeared in several forms around the globe, but all of them must be mutually understandable in order to serve the people well.

There is now a movement around the globe to simplify English, even though people have tried unsuccessfully for hundreds of years to simplify it. One of the most successful tries was that of C. K. Ogden before World War II. He simplified the vocabulary and with this Basic English he started a revolution in the teaching of languages, whereby the basic vocabulary became the center around which teaching of all modern languages circled.

Part 2. But many people have noted that Basic English did not have simplified grammar, which is much harder to learn than is vocabulary. In the last thirty years of the twentieth century, several linguists around the world studied simplified forms of English, and proposed that English be simplified for easier and quicker acquisition by all who wish to learn English, so that they can communicate their basic needs across cultural barriers and ethnic and national limits.

At the University of Kentucky, in 1993, a small group of cosmopolitan professors started work on simplification of English grammar, thus to supplement Basic Vocabulary already established by C. K. Ogden.

Their hard work produced a text of *Transitional English*, which was used in an experiment at the Ministry of Defense of the Slovak Republic in September-October 1996, with the help of a Fulbright Research Award. We thus discovered some shortcomings of the early version of the simplified English text. As a result, a team of a few professors started a new version of the *TE* text.

Part 3. This new version is now ready for more experimentation and acceptance. Though the text may be imperfect, it is very workable, so that we offer it to the world community for verification and exploitation. Only thus can progress come in the desire to produce global face-to-face communication.

Everyone can test it freely; criticize it, and improve it. Then, those who are satisfied, can learn it to talk person-to-person with their new world friends.

We look forward to your evaluation of the ten lessons. The Evaluation appears at the end of this text of *Transitional English*. We hope this book will help you reach your dream to make your global life better and happier. Good luck to you.

----- *Transitional English* Research Project Committee

阅读材料之五

过渡英语的历史

第一部份。过渡英语的历史很短。它开始的理念是：在这个小小的星球上，我们都是同一个地球村的居民；我们发现我们都登在这个无限宇宙中的同一条小船上，我们注定要同生共亡。这就是为什么数以千万，甚至超过十亿人学过英语的原因。

不可否認，英语乃是世界历史上传播最广的語言。类似古罗马语言拉丁语，它已经被世界各地人们一致推选为当令世界共同使用的混合语。它在世界各地出现了多个形式，但是各个形式之间彼此能听懂，从而更好地服务于民众。

几百年以来，人们不断地试图简化英语，虽然都没有成功，然而当今世界正出现一个简化英语的运动。其中要数二战前C.K.奥格登的尝试最为成功。他简化了词汇，並采用这个基本英语对语言教学进行革命性的创新，依靠这个，使所有其它现代语言的教学都以基本词汇作为中心。

Gu Transitional English for Speakers of Chinese—TE—Reading Five

第二部份。但是，很多人也指出，基本英语并没有简化语法，而语法比词汇更为难学。在过去的30年间，世界各地很多语言学家对英语的简化形式作了不少研究，然后提出：简化英语可使那些想学英语的人更容易和更快地学会它，使得他们能穿越文化障碍和种族、国度的限制而进行基本需求的交流。

1993年在肯塔基大学由一个来自世界各地教授组成的小组开始了简化英语语法的工作，以此作为由C.K. Ogden.

奥格登创建的基本词汇的补充。由于他们辛勤的工作，一个过渡英语的课本诞生了。在福布莱特研究奖的资助下这个课本于1996年9月至10月间在斯洛伐克共和国国防部进行了实验试用。因而我们发现了过渡英语早期文本中的一些不足之处。接下来，由几个教授组成的团队开始编写过渡英语新课本。

第三部份。这个新版本已准备好接受更多的实验和认同。虽然该课本仍不完美，它乃是便于使用的，因此我们把它提供给全球的人们进行验证和加从完善。只有这样，在通向全球进行面对面交流的目标时，才能有所成就。

每个人都可随意试用本课本；可以批评它或完善它。然后，如你感到满意，也可学习它以便能与世界各地的新朋友进行面对面的交谈。

我们期望看到你们对以上十课课文的评价。评估书在本过渡英语课本的最后。我们希望本课本能帮助你们实现生活更美好、更愉快的美梦。祝你们好运。

-----*过渡英语研究项目委员会*