

## Preface

For those teachers of English as a Foreign or Second Language who prefer their lessons to evolve on the basis of their own individual choice of material, this dictionary provides ready access to all the main features of English grammar. It does not attempt to vie with the comprehensive studies of the English language. Instead, it concentrates on those areas where experience world-wide has shown most errors occur. I use **error** as an all-embracing term, in contrast to those linguists for whom 'error', 'mistake', 'miscue' and 'goof' *inter alia* represent varying degrees of misdemeanour. Most foreign students, I suspect, have been brought up to accept that any misuse of language is an error. I have had in mind the precept 'Prevention is better than cure', and so have tried to forestall error-making by contrasting right and wrong performance, and by explaining in simple words the how and the why of usage and the meaning of the conventional terms still in use.

It is important for the reader to know where formal and informal English diverge, both in speaking and in writing, and to have an up-to-date picture of contemporary usage. He will find constant reference to common, popular or colloquial English and this is an area where he will be relieved to know there is much flexibility in usage.

Model sentences are just that, with no pretension to be other than good examples for the reader to follow. They are, inevitably, brief, much as one would like to contextualise them more copiously, but I have tried to make them both intelligible in themselves and representative of the grammatical items concerned.

To build on a base of error analysis is nothing new. The dictionary is based on F T Wood's *A Remedial English Grammar for Foreign Students* which guided students through the labyrinth of English grammar for more than twenty years. But its replacement is overdue, and it is necessary to take into account changes in the English language itself, people's attitude to it and the contemporary needs of those who are studying it as a Foreign or Second Language.