

Book One

Understanding Spoken English

a focus on everyday
language in context



Contains:
dialogues
language reviews
answers and
reference lists

Susan Boyer

Use with accompanying audio recording

eBook One

Understanding Spoken English

a focus on everyday language in context

Susan Boyer

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Dear English Language Student,

Welcome to *Understanding Spoken English – a focus on everyday language in context*. This book, along with its accompanying audio recording, has been designed to help you to understand English as it is spoken in 'everyday' situations in English speaking environments around the world. As a student of English as a second or foreign language, you are no doubt aware of the difference between the formally presented language of many textbooks and the speech you hear, outside the language classroom, in the English speaking media or in conversations with native English speakers.

As well as introducing and explaining the meaning of many widely used everyday expressions, each unit focuses on other aspects of English, such as the use of **contractions** (eg. *won't* rather than *will not*), **ellipsis** (incomplete sentences) and **intonation** (the rise and fall of the voice pitch). These features are distinctive characteristics of spoken (rather than written) English. You will also learn social conventions involved in everyday situations such as making a telephone call, dealing with service people and informal social interactions.

I sincerely hope you enjoy and benefit from using *Understanding Spoken English - a focus on everyday language in context*.

Susan Boyer

A note on English accents used in the audio recording

The conversations on the accompanying audio recording present speakers with a variety of different English accents as they are encountered in English speaking environments around the world. This is because it is very beneficial for students to become accustomed to the different accents of English speakers that will be encountered in the media, in international business contexts and social situations.

The intention of presenting different accents, however, is not to provide particular models for imitation but to *increase familiarity* with a variety of different accents.

It should be noted that, though the *accents* of the speakers vary, the vocabulary and grammar points presented in each unit of this book are those common to all varieties of 'native speaker' English.

ABOUT THIS BOOK

Understanding Spoken English has been designed so that you can work through it alone, without the help of a teacher, or in a classroom situation with other students. The book contains nine units of work, each based on a conversation about a particular topic. The units are divided into *six parts* that have been designed to introduce unfamiliar language, *step by step*, in a gradual and systematic way. The layout of the book is as follows:

Part 1 - Focus on listening for general understanding

Part 1 introduces the topic and invites you to listen to an everyday conversation and answer a few general questions by putting a tick next to the correct answers. You will be listening for *general* understanding of the conversation only. (You will not need to understand every word.) This is an important step as it will help you to realise that it's not always necessary to hear every word to understand the general meaning of a conversation. In some units, you are asked to check words in a dictionary, so have a dictionary nearby when you are studying.

Part 2 - Focus on reading & finding the meaning

In this section, you will *read* Conversation 1 as you listen again. When you have finished listening, your task is to *compare Conversation 1 with Conversation 2* (which will be next to Conversation 1). Conversation 1 contains the everyday expressions and Conversation 2 contains an interpretation of the expressions in Conversation 1. This section will help you to learn the *meaning* of the everyday expressions.

Part 3 - Focus on listening for detail

Now you will listen to Conversation 1 again and write in the missing words in the spaces as you hear them. Don't worry about spelling as this exercise focuses on your *listening skills* - you can check your spelling later. Listen to the conversation as many times as you like, then check your answers (and spelling) by comparing what you have written with Conversation 1.

Part 4 - Focus on listening and writing for reinforcement

This section reinforces (strengthens) your memory as you listen once more to Conversation 1 and tick the newly learnt everyday expressions on the list as you hear them. Then you are asked to look at the list of expressions (all taken from Conversation 1) and try to remember their meaning. Write in the ones that you can remember, then check your answers by reading Conversation 1 again or checking the reference list at the back of the book. This may seem like hard work but *writing* the meanings of the newly learnt expressions is a useful way of reinforcing what you have just heard and read.

Part 5 - Focus on language revision - crosswords

Now it's time to test yourself and see what you have learnt by trying the language revision and crossword activity. In this section, you are asked to use the newly learned expressions in a different context. In each unit you are asked to complete sentences with the appropriate expression and complete the crossword. The answers to the exercises can be found in the answer section of this book.

Part 6 - Focus on other aspects of spoken English

In this section, there will be exercises for you to complete and/or cultural advice for you to remember. This section focuses on aspects of spoken English (grammar, pronunciation etc.) that may make it difficult for learners to understand. Each unit focuses on conversation strategies or social conventions used by the speakers in Conversation 1 of that particular unit.

Language Reviews

After Unit 3, Unit 6 and Unit 9 you will find a language review that consists of pictures and sentences containing the 'everyday' expressions, which were introduced in the preceding units, for you to match together. This will help you to see how much you have remembered.

IMPORTANT NOTE TO STUDENTS

Please be aware that the meaning of colloquial language is ***very dependent on the context or situation in which it is used***. 'Understanding Spoken English' has been designed to ***introduce and explain*** the meaning of colloquial expressions used by English speakers in the everyday situations presented in this book. However, because colloquial expressions can have different meanings in different situations, it is not recommended that students of English immediately begin using the newly introduced expressions indiscriminately. It would be much better to spend time becoming familiar with, and understanding the correct meaning of expressions in different situations ***before you use them*** in your conversations.

In this regard, the author and publisher of this book will not be responsible to any person, with regard to the misuse of language, caused directly or indirectly by the information presented in this book.

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